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A human dimension to the Helsinki process

Frankfurter Allgemeine

The CSCE review conference in Vienna, now nearing its end, may prove to have been the most striking success in the process, embodied in the 1975 Helsinki accords, of gradual elimination of the antitheses that brought about the division of Europe.

In years of hard work, Western and non-aligned states have succeeded in making the "human dimension" the nucleus of the CSCE package.

The "third basket" of the 1975 Final Act has emerged as the touchstone of what people in Eastern Europe are hoping for: that the extension and consolidation of human rights will facilitate the coexistence of states with different social systems.

The final document now being drafted in Vienna will deal with issues ranging from improvements in family reunification and prisoners' rights to freedom of travel and the unhindered exchange of information and opinion.

The Soviet Union has approved many of the proposals contained in the draft submitted by the neutral and non-aligned states, including a verification procedure for fulfilling conditions laid down in the "third basket."

An even more important fact, and one often overlooked, is that the West has persuaded the Soviet Union, after years of stalling by the Kremlin, not to regard the CSCE as the substitute for a peace treaty reaffirming the Soviet sphere of influence established in 1945.

This success must not be jeopardised by the West letting itself be put under time pressure.

At the beginning of the Vienna review conference the Soviet Union proposed holding a conference on the "human dimension" in Moscow. Bonn Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher was first to take up this proposal.

The three Western Allies, after initial scepticism, have since agreed to accept the Soviet proposal on the understanding that unofficial human-rights organisations can attend the Moscow conference and express their views.

The proposed conference will be preceded by talks in Paris next year, in Copenhagen in 1990 and in Moscow or Geneva in 1991.

The 35 CSCE member-states will not agree to meet in Moscow until the Kremlin is prepared to accept glasnost for all "third basket" issues.

The Soviet Union now insists on the West and the neutrals agreeing in the Vienna final declaration to hold the 1991 conference in Moscow.

Britain, along with Canada and the Netherlands, refuses to commit itself, thereby delaying the conclusion of the Vienna conference.

Everyone, in contrast, agrees that negotiations on conventional arms in Europe are not to begin until the final document has been issued in Vienna.

So no one knows if Moscow would make concessions on this point.

Views may differ on whether it is right to set ever higher-human rights standards, this being the approach adopted by the United States in particular in the Austrian capital.

In the final analysis only Mr Gorbachov *can say how far Moscow can afford* to accept this, with its difficult domestic and economic situation.

But it would be dangerous to sacrifice the progress made at the CSCE talks to hopes of the catching hold of the "cloak of history" in the form of the reform plans and fine-sounding disarmament proposals made to the West by the Soviet leader. It would also be *running* too high a risk for the West to bank solely on the person of Mr Gorbachov.



CHANCELLOR IN MOSCOW. Bonn Chancellor Helmut Kohl (right) is welcomed by Soviet Prime Minister Nikolai Ryshkov at the beginning of a four-day official visit to the Soviet Union. Four other Cabinet ministers are also in the Bonn party. (Photo: dpa)

For months the view generally held in the West was that the CSCE review conference must be over by the US Presidential elections on 8 November, *allowing* time for conventional arms control talks to begin in the final weeks of Mr Reagan's second term as President.

But that was a misinterpretation of the situation. Washington's leeway will be limited until Mr Reagan's successor assumes office, while the CSCE process will continue beyond the presidency of either Mr Bush or Mr Dukakis.

As for the talks on reducing the conventional imbalance of Nato and Warsaw Pact forces, they seem sure to be the most difficult and longest exercise in the whole gamut of arms control.

They will involve crucial security policy aspects rooted, in the final analysis, in the unresolved German Question.

An apt tenet is that success at the CSCE conference will come to anyone who "stays at the table 10 minutes longer than the Russians." The issues discussed at the CSCE talks and future negotiations on conventional arms control will be more important for the future of Europe than either party-political issues in the West or the Soviet leadership in the Kremlin.

Those who appreciate Mr Gorbachov's economic problems and the extent to which he will remain dependent on Western cooperation will understand that the West stands a fair chance of succeeding if only it stands united.

The Eastern Europeans, for whom the CSCE process may prove an important means of ensuring some degree of independence, would be the first to concede that the West holds the better cards.

So it must insist on linkage of human rights and security and retain sufficient patience to consolidate this link as the basis of its policy.

Jan Reifenberg

(Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung für Deutschland, 22 October 1988)

IN THIS ISSUE

Genscher and Dumas rejoin forces

Süddeutsche Zeitung

Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher's meeting with his French opposite number, Roland Dumas, was [illegible] Chancellor Kohl's visit to Moscow.

It was also more than a mere prelude to the 52nd round of Franco-German consultations.

It was more about Bonn and Paris joining forces — and being seen to do so.

Herr Genscher and M. Dumas agreed in 1986 to coordinate their activities They have rejoined forces since the Socialists' return to power in Paris and M. Dumas' return to the Quai d'Orsay.

The first instance was Herr Genscher's urgent advocacy of an international ban on chemical weapons of all kinds. He is worried by the risk of proliferation.

Yet experience has shown that he alone is not in a position to keep the project on the boil. So Paris has lent hand and officially convened a conference to be held early in January at which to reaffirm, as an initial measure, the Geneva protocol banning chemical warfare.

A further point on which the two Foreign Ministers have joined forces is modernisation of short-range nuclear missiles. Bonn in general, and Herr Genscher in particular, feels a decision on stationing new systems will not be necessary until the early 1990s.

The US Congress does not agree. Once again Paris has backed the German view. M. Dumas and President Mitterrand are both on record as having said it might be better to wait and see whether conventional disarmament talks achieve results.

Conventional arms control talks will not begin before the year's end and must, in M. Mitterrand's view, be allowed at least two years in which to prove their worth.

Herr Genscher flew to Moscow with Chancellor Kohl. M. Dumas will be flying to Moscow with President Mitterrand soon afterward.

Mr Gorbachov is unlikely to fail to see the similarities in the views of both men.

(Süddeutsche Zeitung, Munich, 22 October 1988)

■ WORLD AFFAIRS

Dangers lurking deep within perestroika

Confusion and misunderstanding are liable to cloud any policy aimed at reaching new horizons. This is what has happened to policies affecting relations between Germany and the Soviet Union.

Views may differ on whether Bonn's policy toward Moscow, as part of its Ostpolitik in general, is aimed at new horizons. But that is not the point.

The point is that it might be seen in this light. So analysis must take this into account. It must do so to ensure that those who are in charge of German foreign and security policy remain aware of the risks that may result from good will and from attempts to steer a course of change in Europe.

Special attention must be paid to public opinion in the Federal Republic of Germany. As the latest surveys have shown, Germans like Mr Gorbachov and are steadily gaining confidence in his policy. Direct comparison between President Reagan and President Gorbachov is revealing.

The freely elected leader of one of the world's oldest democracies gets 54-per-cent support, whereas approval of Mr Gorbachov, who a mere month ago eliminated rivals and trouble-makers in the classic communist manner by ousting them and assuming full power himself, enjoys 84-per-cent support.

Admiration of the advocate of innovation has plainly prevailed over mistrust of the instruments of his power and the way he uses them.

West Germans appear to be keenly aware of the need for power to used, but mainly to clear the rubble of socialism rather than on domestic issues and on politics in the West.

The fund of goodwill Mr Gorbachov clearly enjoys sheds an entirely new light on the "comparison of values" between the systems.

It is steadily becoming a genuine comparison, with comparable values available for comparison.

That would fulfil a hope expressed by Mr Gorbachov in his speech on 2 November 1987 marking the 70th anniversary of the Russian Revolution.

He said: "In other words it is a matter of whether capitalism will be capable of adjusting to the conditions of a fair comparison between the intellectual values of the two worlds."

This adjustment is in full swing, with the "fair comparison" being reaffirmed by polls of public opinion.

Confidence in Mr Gorbachov is on the increase, while his system has been neutralised in its difference from the Western system by having been accepted as a comparable entity.

A further forecast the Soviet leader made last year is increasingly coming into its own: "New thinking is gradually making headway in international affairs and destroying the stereotypes of anti-Sovietism and eliminating mistrust of our initiatives and activities."

It must be admitted that one of the strong points of democratic, constitutional government is that internationally it can move freely and without inhibitions or fears of contact, being safely aware of its own quality.

Yet what if this freedom from bias is reflected in opinion polls of the kind mentioned earlier, thereby making security precautions, another policy aspect, steadily come to seem, in the eyes of the general public, increasingly superfluous?

What makes Herr Kohl's visit to Moscow and Mr Gorbachov's visit to Bonn next spring so fascinating is the competition between this agenda and that of ties with the West, including factors such as "modernisation" and an "overall concept."

It already seems to be a foregone conclusion that the quest for an overall military concept commissioned by the North Atlantic Council meeting in Reykjavik in June 1987 will be upstaged, especially in the eyes of the German public, by a marked thaw in East-West relations.

A modernisation of nuclear weapons, should the overall concept deem it indispensable, can hardly be implemented when there is no public feeling of being under military threat.

It matters less whether this reduced perception of the Soviet threat is attributable to the impressive diplomacy of Mr Gorbachov or to the rhetoric of good will that has been the West's response.

Psychology is here involved, and the psychology clearly contraindicates a fresh round of military modernisation, no matter how constantly modernisation may continue in the East.

We are fast arriving at a state of affairs in which such balances of power can no longer be struck. In East-West ties, for one, we are on the brink of fresh disarmament expectations.

They will naturally take time to test, and it will inevitably be a time in which the wait-and-see attitude will prevail.

What is more, Bonn is steadily coming to feel that there can be little or no question of investing as much political capital in arms modernisation as was last done in 1983.

Last but not least, the Soviet leader is not seen as just a man of nice words and resounding rhetoric. At a recent meet-

RHEINISCHER MERKUR

ing in Bonn of the New York-based East-West Forum perestroika was seen as a measure of self-containment or self-rollback by the Soviet Union.

In other words, Mr Gorbachov's blunt and relentless references to the enormous shortcomings of the Soviet system have lessened the threateningly monolithic facade of the East Bloc against which Nato set out to take arms nearly 40 years ago.

In other words still, 40 years of deterrence have done socialism less damage in its self-assessment than Mr Gorbachov's perestroika.

The Soviet leader may be trying to capitalise on this state of affairs and derive benefit and renewed strength from a forward thrust, but the German political preference is undeniable.

Bonn's attitude is based more on "management of the decline" than on "deterrence," which necessitates entirely new definitions of defence in the security policy context.

As yet not even a start to a new language or a new definition has been made. Instead, expectations — and the business of "cooperative security" — are flourishing.

One can but hope that German policy will be drafted and outlined by sound interpreters. Otherwise the new dynamism in Ostpolitik will lead only to fresh misunderstandings where we can least afford them: with our friends in the West.

Thomas Kielinger

(Rheinischer Merkur/Christ und Welt, Bonn, 21 October 1988)

More realistic attitudes in German-Turkish relations

I love the Germans, the Germans love machines, contemporary Turkish poet Fazil Hüsnü Daglarca says in a revealing aphorism.

It illustrates what is to be made of the traditional ties of German-Turkish friendship to which constant reference was made during President Evren's state visit to Bonn.

The Turks probably place greater value on them than the Germans, who as a rule see them in a historical, economic and political context.

The Turks, in contrast, feel an immediate and direct relation, an "affinity" with the Germans.

German-Turkish friendship is an undeniable fact. It is based in history on the close ties between Prussia, and later Imperial Germany, and the Ottoman Empire.

Both empires came to an end in the comradeship-in-arms of the First World War. The Turks continue to refer to this first war with pleasure whereas the Germans don't.

Germany today no longer needs this comradeship-in-arms, of course.

Kemal Atatürk, the founder of modern Turkey, held the Germans in high esteem. In 1934 he presciently foresaw the outbreak of a Second World War he astutely anticipated as ending disastrously for Germany.

In the 1930s Turkey offered political asylum to exiled Germans such as Ernst Reuter, later Mayor of post-war Berlin.

German academics in Istanbul and Ankara helped to modernise Turkey in line with Atatürk's ideas, and Turkey owes its present secular legal system to a large extent to German lawyers who taught at Turkish universities in those days.

German-Turkish ties grew even closer after the war, especially once Ankara had joined Nato.

Economic cooperation has steadily been extended to the point at which the Federal Republic is now Turkey's foremost trading partner.

Bonn is a leading source of economic and development aid, while Turkey has lately emerged as a popular holiday destination for German tourists.

That helps them to get to know more about a country that is mostly in Asia but engaged in strenuous efforts to catch up with the West.

But the nodal point of German-Turkish relations, as was reaffirmed during President Evren's visit, is the 1.5 million Turkish migrant workers and their families in Germany.

In recent years there have been upsets despite the progress made in relations between Turks and Germans in the Federal Republic.

Bonn felt obliged to require Turkish residents to hold visas. Measures were introduced to limit their number. They were accompanied by critical Turkish comments.

Many Germans agree that these measures are "illiberal" and accuse their fellow-countrymen of xenophobia, an argument the Turkish press is only too happy to take up.

The two sides are slowly but surely sounding a more realistic note that could herald the friendship of old coming into its own.

The fact is, despite some degree of adjustment, that Turkish residents have not, by and large, been assimilated.

The Berlin borough of Kreuzberg, arguably a Turkish enclave on German soil, is symbolic of this failure.

Progressively-minded people might like to clamour for the assimilation of Turkish residents in Germany, but it is unlikely to come about in the years ahead either.

Existing difficulties are all too easily forgotten. A realistic appraisal of the situation cannot fail to acknowledge that millions of migrants from other parts of the world have not been successfully integrated anywhere.

There is still a substantial dislike of Algerians in France, while Britain has failed to assimilate its Indian and Pakistani communities.

Even in the United States, a proverbial melting-pot, most minorities still lead separate and distinctive lives — and not just Hispanics but even the extremely adaptable Chinese.

In their respective urban areas fluency in Spanish or Chinese is more important than English.

So many experts who are far from ill-disposed toward the Turks are of the opinion that coexistence in harmony will only be possible if there is no further increase in their number.

It would, on the other hand, be unrealistic to expect it to decline by any great extent.

Turkish officials in Ankara have lately indicated that they are aware of the difficulties faced by the Federal Republic, which is not a country that has traditionally welcomed immigrants and is beset by high unemployment as a further obstacle to the assimilation of more Turks.

Turkish newspapers often take a different view. They occasionally berate the Germans in a display of bias that takes some beating.

They fail to mention that many of their fellow-countrymen who live in Germany are a far cry from the Westernised Turkish upper classes.

Groups that regard the Germans as "impure" because they eat pork and drink alcohol (to name only two, more venial sins) have lately gained increasing support.

President Evren is well aware of this fact, but many Germans who would like to see themselves as friends of the Turks are either unaware of it or prefer to disregard it.

Wolfgang Günter Lerch

(Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung für Deutschland, 21 October 1988)

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■ BAVARIA AFTER STRAUSS

A succession without the usual petty infighting

DIE ZEIT

Barely a fortnight after Franz Josef Strauss's funeral, Bavaria has a new government and the CSU has agreed on a new party leader.

The changeover has been swift and seemingly smooth in a country where political reshuffles tend to take weeks of wrangling.

Seldom has a transition been as trouble-free, especially in an instance such as this, when an outstanding personality such as Herr Strauss has died suddenly without putting his affairs in order.

The shock of this sudden and utterly unexpected loss and the feeling of respect for the outstanding personality of the dead man may well have been instrumental in bringing about this textbook example of a succession without petty infighting and vociferous rivalry.

Tactical considerations may also have played a part, certainly in the case of Gerold Tandler, who chose not to stand against either Theo Waigel as CSU leader or Max Streibl as Prime Minister.

Herr Tandler even chose not to stand for deputy leader of the CSU, possibly because he feels that the more difficulty Herr Waigel and Herr Streibl have in handling Herr Strauss's legacy, the like-[illegible] be at the ready in the wings should the need arise.

It might not, of course. Successors have often been known to plough their own furrow on taking over from an outstanding predecessor; they have often emerged as personalities in their own right.

What is more, the swift change-over of power in Munich has made a further political point. Contrary to the general assumption, the CSU has evidently always been more than just Franz Josef Strauss.

The smooth and matter-of-course transition may be deserving of respect and stand out like an exclamation point, but it still leaves a fair number of question marks.

The division of labour between the two successors may make sound sense, with Premier Streibl standing for Bavaria and the Bavarian soul and CSU leader-to-be Waigel for the CSU's national role, but both men face the same fundamental problems.

Herr Strauss was always portrayed as the larger-than-life unifying figure of conservatives and nationals of all hues.

But their wishes and hopes usually found best expression when, after the return of the CDU/CSU to power in Bonn in 1982, he repeatedly called for more depth and a more striking and straightforward policy approach.

That was particularly important for the overwhelming majority of Bavarian voters, a combination of principled Catholics, middle classes, artisans, farmers and erstwhile refugees.

To what extent can Herr Streibl, a former Passion Play actor yet a sober and level-headedd man, do justice to these sentiments?

Similar questions arise at national level. As CSU leader in the Bundestag and deputy leader of the CDU/CSU parliamentary party Dr Waigel has successfully reconciled Bonn with Munich and vice-versa.

But this feat may well prove even more difficult if he retains both jobs in addition to the leadership of the CSU in Munich.

Undeniable differences exist between the CDU and the CSU. Will he emphasise smooth mediation and reconcilation or attach greater importance to maintaining the CSU's distinctive profile?

In the complicated three-cornered coalition ties between the CDU, the CSU and the FDP peace and quiet — and a more businesslike relationship — may now prevail.

The CSU in Bavaria will need to settle down to its new leadership, as will the Free Democrats under new management, as it were. So Chancellor Kohl, the CDU leader, seems likely to have an easier time of it for a while.

Yet that in no way solves the fundamental problem of how to retain the allegiance of the right wing of the CDU/CSU now Herr Strauss is no longer around to rally their support.

This even poses a problem for the CSU, and if its still extremely substantial electoral support were to decline, how could the continued decline in support for the CDU possibly be offset?

This is an increasingly urgent issue, with CDU support declining in the north, in the west and even as far south as the Rhineland-Palatinate.

The leadership change-over in the FDP in no way simplifies matters. The Free Democrat will no longer benefit from Herr Strauss's irrational attacks on them.

Under Count Lambsdorff's leadership they will, however, canvass support in the middle class and small business wing of CDU supporters (while still upholding Liberal viewpoints on constitutional issues).

As for CDU general secretary Heiner Geissler's tentative bids to enlist support to the political left of the CDU, he may now have to hold his fire.

All told, then, the Bonn coalition will need to concentrate on holding on to its present position. The CDU/CSU in particular is faced with the old problem of shifting voter loyalties within the coalition.

Its gravest threat must be the risk of a fair number of CDU/CSU supporters now abstaining at the polls, some because they miss Herr Strauss and what he stood for, others because they dislike the idea of Herr Geissler's reform bid having been spiked.

Carl-Christian Kaiser

(Die Zeit, Hamburg, 21 October 1988)



Capable treasurer . . . Max Streibl. (Photo: dpa)

New Premier cuts a less ebullient figure

Max Streibl, the new Bavarian Premier, is a quieter and less ebullient figure than Franz Josef Strauss.

He was Finance Minister under Herr Strauss, and the decision by the CSU in the Bavarian state assembly to nominate him as its sole candidate for the Premiership would, until recently, have come as a surprise.

Yet Herr Streibl, 56, created such a favourable impression as Deputy Premier after Herr Strauss's death that he soon emerged as the man most likely to succeed.

Gerold Tandler, another potential successor built up by Herr Strauss, is regularly described in some sections of the media as a grim-faced cherub.

Herr Streibl is a cheerful father-figure, like Herr Strauss's predecessor Alfons Goppel and Herr Strauss himself in his later years.

Herr Streibl has many other features that might reasonably be expected of a Bavarian Premier. He has the right figure for the traditional Bavarian costume, has a marked sense of harmony and, above all, can look back on a suitable career.

He was born in Oberammergau, where his father was a hotelier, in 1932. His first love was the village's famous Passion Play. He acted first as an angel, then as a Roman, and today he is merely one of the extras.

He went to a Benedictine senior school in Ettal and read law at Munich University, graduating in 1959.

Two years later he was appointed to a senior position in the Bavarian state chancellery, while back home in Garmisch-Partenkirchen he beavered away at his political career.

He was a founder-member of the *Junge Union*, the CDU/CSU youth wing, in Garmisch, finally serving as state chairman.

He was elected to the Oberammergau district council and then, in 1961, to the Bavarian state assembly. In 1967 he was appointed CSU general secretary.

Seven years later, having gained a reputation for being patient and attentive to detail, he was appointed Finance Minister. It was a demanding portfolio that the CSU was not alone in feeling he handled well.

His policy was to keep Bavaria's debts as low as possible while ensuring economic growth, industrial development and new investment. It is regarded, both in Bavaria and further afield, as exemplary.

Elisabeth Ramelsberger

(Hamburger Abendblatt, 18 October 1988)

Ready to step into shoes of der Alte

Theo Waigel was the right man to lead the CSU into the 21st century, Anton Jaumann, his political mentor, said in May 1987.

Herr Jaumann was merely referring to the CSU's Swabian region, which Dr Waigel took over from him last year.

But Dr Waigel, 49, the son of a bricklayer and smallholder, now seems set to take over as leader of the entire party.

Now the CSU's executive committee has decided in his favour there can be no doubt that a clear majority of the 1,000-plus delegates at the mid-November party conference will vote for him to succeed the late Franz Josef Strauss.

As CSU leader in the Bonn Bundestag he has made a name for himself as a loyal supporter of the CDU/CSU-FDP coalition and of Chancellor Kohl, the CDU leader.

Herr Strauss said only a few months ago that Chancellor Kohl would gladly have seen Dr Waigel serve as Economic Affairs Minister in his Federal Cabinet.

But Dr Kohl will now have to wait a couple of years — and win the next general election. Dr Waigel has made it clear that he intends to remain CSU leader in the Bundestag once he is voted CSU leader at the forthcoming Munich party conference.

Close associates say that he will definitely have to be made a Cabinet Minister if the CDU/CSU retains power in the 1990 general election. A quieter person than Herr Strauss, Dr Waigel readily refers to and quotes Herr Strauss, who is now piously referred to in the CSU as *der Alte* (The Old Man).



Much in common with Strauss . . . Theo Waigel. (Photo: dpa)

Yet he is so self-assured in the way he handles Herr Strauss's political legacy that he had no qualms about telling amusing anecdotes about Herr Strauss during the funeral ceremony held at the Bavarian mission in Bonn.

One such anecdote dated back to just over a year ago, when Herr Strauss was still a member of the Bonn Bundestag.

Perplexed by the complicated voting procedure, he made an inadvertent mistake in the voting for Bundestag deputy speaker, ticking the name of the Greens' candidate on his ballot paper.

Dr Waigel was shocked, happening to have glanced at Herr Strauss as he was marking his paper. He quickly arranged for a rubber to be discreetly passed to Herr Strauss.

At the end of weeks of coalition talks after the 1987 general election Herr Strauss offered to address Dr Waigel on first-name terms (using the familiar second person singular rather than the formal second person plural).

Dr Waigel has been known to hint that Herr Strauss was very much a father figure and that their relationship was on that basis.

Herr Strauss, he said, was one of the very few people (other than his parents) who addressed him as Theodor (rather than as Theo). And Herr Strauss regularly gave him a pipe as a Christmas

Continued on page 4

■ THE POLITICAL PARTIES

No longer as white as the driven snow: financial scandals hit Greens

The Greens have long been no less adept than the established political parties in Bonn at saying one thing and meaning another.

At a recent session of their national executive committee they dealt mainly with money, but the marathon session, with its undertones of venom and personal rancour testified to a special skirmish in the war of attrition between wings of the party.

For over a year the Greens have been unable to deny that there have been financial scandals of one magnitude or another in their ranks.

They may be attributable to a casual "alternative" attitude toward money, an outlook that doesn't take receipts and records, decisions and ledger entries very seriously.

In some instances party members may have "interpreted" decisions to their own advantages to the brink of fraud (or beyond), being tempted by the ready flow of "government money."

Whatever the reason, all political parties have skeletons of this kind in the cupboard and hope against hope that the details will never come to light.

The much graver point is that the Greens are evidently reluctant to settle their scandals frankly and in the open.

Helmut Lippelt, spokesman for the parliamentary party, says the price they are having to pay is a "radical loss of credibility."

He might just as well have added that the Greens are in the process of forfeiting once and for all their claim to behave more respectably than other parties.

They are irresponsibly jettisoning an important vote-earning argument — and heightening the infighting that has already paralysed them.

Financial malpractices in connection with a building in a Bonn suburb bought for conversion into a new party head office were only ostensibly the tip of the iceberg.

The building was bought for DM1.4m and has been converted for between DM3m and DM4m. Many level-headed Greens feel the whole business has been an appalling waste of money.

Be that as it may, income tax, health insurance and social security contributions seem not to have been paid in respect of wages earned by former drug addicts who helped with the conversion work.

Paperwork appears to have been forged and the public prosecutor's office has shown interest in some aspects of the affair, while others have been settled — as far as possible — by additional payments.

A majority of the Greens probably console themselves with the thought that the construction workers will at least have earned a little money. But have others, including leading Greens, also helped themselves to a cash bonus? Who is to blame for a scandal that has so lastingly shaken the credibility of a party that is so vociferously critical of everything and everyone?

Has the national executive tried to pass the buck to the site manager, to the auditor or even to outsiders? Can the leading Greens claim to have an easy conscience?

These are questions that must definitely be asked of a national executive on which the "fundamentalists" have a majority and which has a reputation for being less than above-board in the way it handles the party's business.

There have been references to unusual advance payments and grants, to missing statements of accounts, to dubious fees paid and cash pledges that were either not honoured or had to be approved after the event by party bodies.

The national executive has appointed a commission of inquiry. But is the commission really in a position to investigate freely and independently? Was its purpose to expose or to cover up malpractices?

Critics of the national executive say not all the cards have been laid on the table. A chronological outline of events drawn up by Lukas Beckmann, the Greens' former national business manager and spokesman, makes one wonder.

In the long term the Greens will be unable to avoid having the books audited by qualified accountants.

For the time being, however, the national executive has ruled that while there may have been political mistakes in the way the affair was handled there can be no question of individual blame.

Members of the executive representing other wings of the party were outvoted, which cannot have come as much of a surprise (many knowledgeable critics didn't bother to attend the meeting).

The relative strength of the various wings on the national executive is a well-known fact — as is the executive's inability to abandon its *laager* mentality. Anyone who criticises improper behaviour by individual "fundamentalists" can expect to be vilified, while the dispute over hard cash has widened the gap between the wings.

One "fundamentalist" was quite frank about the position, saying that anyone who wanted to oust the national executive would need to be sure of a majority. The facts of the case no longer counted.

This comment testified to a grave setback to attempts by committed Greens with no overriding loyalties to one wing or the other to hold a referendum to resolve the policy dispute once and for all.

Agreement across ideological barriers now seems impossible, with objective issues being viewed solely in terms of factional loyalties and in disregard of the facts.

A power struggle now seems inevitable. The "fundamentalists" are lamenting that the realpolitik wing of the party is intent on a split, but that is mainly an attempt to pass the buck.

In the upper echelons of the party it no longer seems to matter that the Greens still have a parliamentary party in the Bundestag, in state assemblies and on local councils and that many Greens are still gritting their teeth and working hard for the ecological cause.

In the wake of this latest financial scandal the Greens as a party are less credible than ever.

Horst Bieber

(Die Zeit, Hamburg, 21 October 1988)

Continued from page 3

present. Dr Waigel feels he has much in common with Herr Strauss in origins and career. His parents, like Herr Strauss's, were ordinary folk.

Like Herr Strauss, he went to university, is fond of using quotations that testify to his classical education — and yet remains deeply-rooted in his native Bavaria.

He and his family still live on his parents' farm in Oberrohr, population 500, although he no longer farms the family's five hectares of land himself.

He clearly gets on well with virtually everyone, although that is occasionally made out to be a shortcoming.

Gerold Tandler, a potential rival for the CSU leadership, is said to have suggested to party members that the CSU did not need a harmony-loving Theo Waigel as leader in addition to the unspectacular Max Streibl as Bavarian Premier.

But fellow-members of the CSU in the Bonn Bundestag say that is a typical instance of Herr Tandler, the "Munich terrier," underrating the qualities of the CSU's "man in Bonn."

Wolfgang Wühner-Schmidt

(Lubecker Nachrichten, 18 October 1988)

Cash-raising rules need overhauling

A tendency toward extremes is unfortunately widespread in the dispute over what is acceptable in financing political parties.

Helmut Schmidt, for instance, has always felt that parties ought to be financed strictly on the basis of membership dues and donations. He is not alone in this view.

But just imagine what insisting on parties relying on membership dues and donations would mean.

In a modern society run on free-market economic lines, parties backed by well-heeled donors would hold an overwhelming financial (and political) advantage.

That would hardly be to the liking of democrats keen to decouple — as far as possible — this sector of political decision-making from the almighty deutschemark.

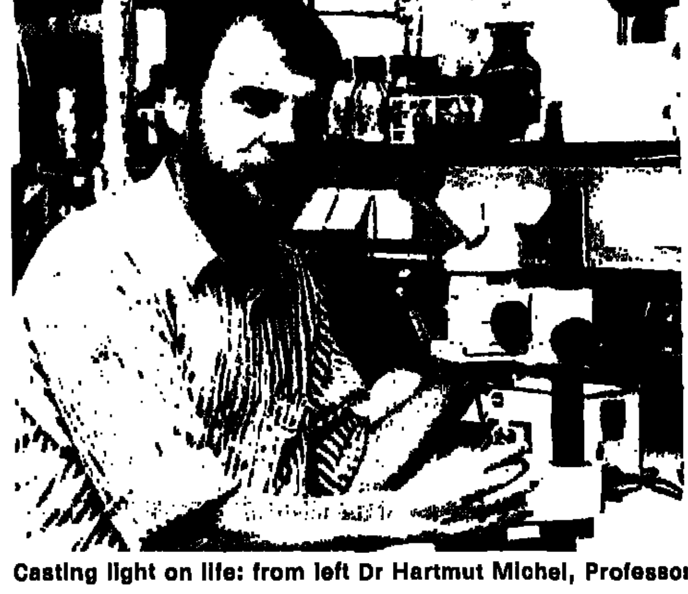
So the fundamental idea on which refunding of campaign expenditure and tax incentives for party-political donations are based is right.

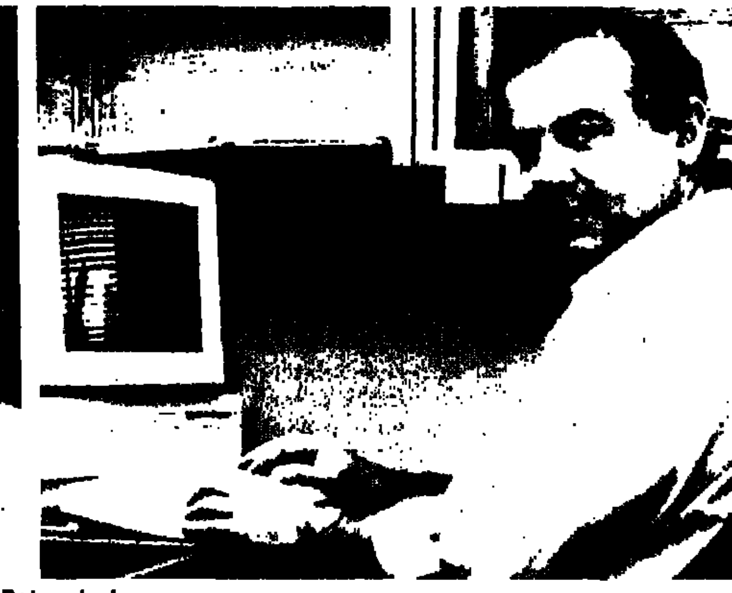
But the established political parties are brazen in the way they make use of these provisions, while the Greens are slipshod, to say the least, in the way they run their finances.

There is no apparent reason why there should be an annual lump sum from the taxpayer's pocket over and above the reimbursement of election campaign expenditure.

The size of party-political donations for which tax incentives are available is and remains a scandal, let alone the fact that donors' identities are only required to be revealed when donations exceed DM40,000. Suggestions such as these merely forfeit the merit marks that the parties would like to earn.

(Süddeutsche Zeitung, Munich, 15 October 1988)





Casting light on life: from left Dr Hartmut Michel, Professor Robert Huber, Professor Dr Johann Deisenhofer. (Photos: dpa)

■ NOBEL PRIZE FOR CHEMISTRY

Treble success chalks up another one for Einstein's alma mater

Three Germans have been jointly awarded the Nobel Prize for Chemistry. Johann Deisenhofer, 45, Robert Huber, 51, and Hartmut Michel, 40, received the award for their research into photosynthesis — which means into how light is transformed into life. The work was carried out at the Max Planck Institute of Biochemistry at Martinsried, near Munich, *one of various institutes under the control of the* Max Planck Society, the biggest research organisation in Germany. The society was founded in 1911 as the Kaiser Wilhelm Society. It was later renamed in memory of a physicist, Max Planck, who died in 1947. The society has produced 25 Nobel winners. It became internationally famous through Albert Einstein and a chemist, Otto Hahn, who himself won the Nobel Prize for Chemistry in 1944. It employs 5,000 scientists on a budget of 1.2 billion marks a *year allocated by the state. This story about this year's* prize-winners was written by Dieter Thierbach. It appeared in the national daily, *Die Welt*.

Johann Deisenhofer, Robert Huber and Hartmut Michel, who have been awarded the Nobel Prize for Chemistry, discovered how the smallest units of a protein, which is embedded in a cell membrane, are structured.

The last German to be awarded the Nobel Prize for Chemistry was Georg Wittig. In 1979, he shared it with an *American, Herbert Brown*.

The target for Deisenhofer, Huber and Michel was extracted from the cell membrane of a bacterium which uses the light energy of the sun in the same way as green plants and algae to produce organic substances.

All food has its origins in this process, known as photosynthesis, a phenomenon which is the prerequisite for all living things.

Photosynthesis is the most important chemical reaction within the biosphere. During this process there is a synthesis of organic compounds from carbon dioxide and water (with the release of oxygen) using light energy.

Photosynthesis and cell respiration produce a situation in which the sun sustains a continuous energy cycle in the biosphere.

The three scientists were able for the first time to gain a direct insight into the minute structural details of a biological "photoelectric cell." They discovered how light is transformed into life.

With the help of X-ray analysis they analysed the atomic structure of the photosynthetic reaction centre of purple bacteria — a sensational achievement in two respects.

On the one hand, the structure provides information on the function of this molecular energy transformer.

Information is also provided on the initial stages of transformation of light into chemical energy, on key processes of photosynthesis, which up to now could only be indirectly and incompletely analysed.

On the other hand, the reaction centre *is both the most complicated and the* first membrane protein structure whose atomic details have been clarified.

Although the photosynthetic structure of the researchers' guinea-pig is less complex than that of algae and more sophisticated plants the structural analyses revealed that there is a close link between the bacterial reaction centre and the oxygen-producing protein complex of the more advanced plants.

The structure discovered by the scientists can be used to generally find out more about photosynthesis.

The prizewinning work is not only significant for photosynthesis: many key biological functions are connected by membrane proteins; for example, the transportation of chemical substances between cells, the effect of hormones and the conduction of impulses between nerve cells.

The reaction centre is an indispensable means in chemists' research of understanding how high-speed (up to one billionth of a second) transfer of electrons in biological systems can take place over molecular-sized distances (over more than 10 atoms).

The structure of biological molecules *can only be determined after it* has been brought into a crystalline form. This is particularly difficult in the case of membrane proteins.

The only method of determining the spatial structure of biological macromolecules is X-ray analysis. To do this, large, well-arranged and three-dimensional crystals are needed.

Michel crystallised the purple bacterium *Rhodopseudomas viridis* in 1982. Its structural identification took place between 1982 and 1985 in colloboration with the other two.

Their findings have given decisive stimuli to both photosynthesis research and the analysis of membrane protein. Their publication led to much international recognition.

The first reaction of many scientists to the Nobel award was that all three had made a tremendous contribution to understanding of the various stages of the development of plant life.

As Manfred Mahnig from the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFB, a research organisation) which funded the project, explained: "All animals and human beings only exist because plants provide the necessary nutrients."

Huber, a chemistry professor, described getting the prize as a "great honour" for his entire research team.

Michel and Deisenhofer were involved in Huber's research on structural biology while graduate students studying for a doctorate at the Max Planck Institute of Biochemistry in Martinsried near Munich.

Huber ranks as the brainchild of the entire research project. He had the basic idea and supervised his two colleagues.

He was born on 20 February, 1937, and is the director of the biochemistry institute. Last year the Society of German Chemists awarded him the Richard Kuhn Medal for "his decisive contributions to the X-ray analysis of biological macromolecules."

Professor Deisenhofer was born on 30 September, 1943, in Zusamaltheim in Bavaria. After studying physics at the Institute of Science and Technology in Munich he worked on his doctorate (supervisor: Professor Huber) at the biochemistry institute between 1971 and 1974.

In 1987 he qualified as a university professor at the Institute of Science and Technology in Munich and, at the beginning of this year, he started to lecture at the University of Texas in Dallas.

His research has played a decisive role in improving X-ray analysis methods — for example, by reducing calculation times and providing a more sound theoretical foundation. He was surprised by the news about the prize early in the morning at his Dallas home.

His first reaction was: "I still can't believe it. I'm still in a state of shock."

Asked whether he ever thought he would receive the prize, he said: "Of course, rumours were circulating among colleagues, but I never really took them seriously."

The youngest of the three, Dr. Michel, was born in Ludwigsburg on 18 July, 1948. He studied biochemistry in Tübingen and Munich.

In 1979 he went to the biochemistry institute. He qualified as a professor in 1986 at the University of Munich.

Since 1987 Michel has been head of the Molecular Membrane Biology department at the Max Planck Institute of Biophysics in Frankfurt.

He has already received many prizes. In 1986 he received the much sought-after grant of the Fund of the Chemical Industry and the Leibniz Prize of the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft.

Dieter Thierbach

(Die Welt, Bonn, 20 October 1988)

The ones who've gone before

Previous German winners of the Nobel Prize for Chemistry are:

1902, *Emil Fischer*;
1905, Adolf Ritter v. Baeyer;
1907, Eduard Buchner;
1909, Wilhelm Ostwald;
1910, Otto Wallach;
1915, Richard Willstätter;
1918, Fritz Haber;
1920, Walther Nernst;
1927, Heinrich Wieland;
1928, Adolf Windaus;
1929, Hans v. Euler-Chelpin;
1930, Hans Fischer;
1931, Carl Bosch/Friedrich Bergius;
1938, Richard Kuhn;
1939, Adolf Butenandt;
1944, Otto Hahn;
1950, Kurt Adler/Otto Diels;
1953, Hermann Staudinger;
1963, Karl Ziegler;
1967, Manfred Eigen;
1973, Ernst Otto Fischer;
1979, Georg Wittig.

dpa

(Hamburger Abendblatt, 20 October 1988)

■ HEALTH-SYSTEM REFORMS DRAWN UP

Minister on the defensive: cost-cutting plans would mean patients paying more

Medical insurance in Germany is to become more expensive. Plans drawn-up by Employment and Social Affairs Minister Norbert Blüm will mean higher monthly contributions and reduced insurance payouts on certain services and items (spectacles and false teeth will cost more). The controversial measures have drawn heavy criticism from doctors, who say the limits will restrict their scope for treatment; from the trade unions, whose members will have to pay more every month to remain insured; and from the Opposition parties in Parliament. To qualify for medical benefits in Germany, people must be insured with either a state-backed scheme or with a private company. Uninsured people have to pay for themselves.

The trade unions are so upset about the Bonn government's health reform plans that they organised a day of protest.

Doctors, who held tough negotiations with Chancellor Helmut Kohl, are likewise unhappy.

Taxi-drivers (taxis are often used for transporting patients to and from hospitals and surgeries and even to cure centres — and paid for by insurance schemes) and other pressure groups are also likely to point out the expected detrimental effects passing the health reform bill would have.

The villain of the piece is Bonn Minister of Employment and Social Affairs, Norbert Blüm, whose efforts at fending off criticism have not been all that successful — although he rightly enough points out that the criticism is contradictory.

Are the people insured in the government's statutory insurance scheme being squeezed, as claimed by the unions and the Bundestag opposition parties?

Or is it a matter of people working and earning good money in the health system, which is a growth industry, being asked to make sacrifices?

Blüm's project is being rejected for varying reasons. He just cannot claim that it is a success and that the burdens will be evenly spread.

Despite what the minister says, the insured will have to face a greater financial burden than industry. Patients will have to foot a higher share of their health bills.

This means that, apart from the compulsory contribution to the statutory health insurance scheme deducted from a person's income, patients will have to pay more for treatment.

Of course, there are items that people should at least partly pay for themselves.

Taxi journeys, for example, are a fringe case. It is difficult to justify them as an essential part of medical treatment.

And it is only right that, because of the huge costs involved, new pairs of spectacles should only be paid for if a person's eyesight has deteriorated. At the moment they are handed out at regular intervals. But bearing part of the cost for dentures is not as clear-cut a case.

The intention is to persuade patients to put pressure on their dentists to choose a less expensive form of treatment.

But are patients in a position to judge themselves which form of dentures are adequate and where luxury begins?

The final decision is usually left up to the dentist.

Despite the planned bonus for patients who have their teeth seen to regularly patients will in future have to bear forty per cent of the costs. This is too much.

In the discussion about this controversial aspect Labour Minister Blüm has insisted that patients should be able to decide for themselves which category of treatment they want and whether they are willing to pay the additional costs.

The coalition has now decided to increase the amount hospital patients insured in the statutory health insurance schemes have to pay during their first two weeks in hospital from DM70 to DM140.

This has merely tightened a provision originally introduced by the SPD-FDP government.

As a rule the patient himself does not decide whether he goes into hospital or *not. He is usually admitted following a* doctor's referral. Where is the patients' scope for influencing costs?

In the final analysis, it all boils down to one thing: Labour Minister Blüm needs more money.

He tries to cover up his financial problems by selling his cost-sharing philosophy. A further burden for the insured is to be expected in the field of medication.

Even the health insurance companies feel that Blüm's idea of fixed contribu*tions can only be realised after consid*erable preliminary restructuring.

The additional payment will be drastically increased in the case of the majority of medications from 15 per cent per item, at most DM15. Becoming ill is becoming more expensive.

It is doubtful whether increased payments by the patients themselves will gradually make them more rational in their use of the health system.

The doctors are already complaining that a growing number of patients are asking for prescriptions, only to leave a lot of the medicine just lying around at home.

But shouldn't the doctors themselves do more to make it clear that taking medicine is no magical cure for their ailments?

Many patients feel that they have been helped if they are able to leave the doctor's surgery with a prescription.

Are they likely to contradict the doctor if, in future, he wants to prescribe them an expensive medication because they "*need*" it?

Are patients likely flick through price lists before they go to the doctor to make sure the cheapest comparable medicine is prescribed?

The pharmaceuticals industry at any rate can feel satisfied with the coalition's latest resolutions.

There is no longer talk of a "solidarity contribution" by these firms.

At the beginning of the year Blüm demanded such a contribution. He has become very quiet on this point ever since.

Right from the start Blüm assessed the contribution of the hospitals to the health reform from a realistic angle. It is somewhere near zero.

The hospitals alone account for a third of all expenditures by the statutory health insurance companies.

How can a reform be successful and change structures without including this segment?

A great deal would suggest that this reform will not even be able to contain costs let alone reduce them.

Michael Brandt

(Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger, Cologne, 19 October 1988)

Wave of protest from doctors, SPD and trade unionists



The agreement reached by the Bonn coalition on the health reform and the price patients will have to pay for it has triggered a similar wave of protest.

The SPD has described the agreement as a "list of maliciousness."

Doctors feel that their freedom has been bureaucratically curbed.

Only the president of the Standing Conference of German Chambers of Commerce and Industry (DIHT) had words of encouragement for the health reform bill.

Patients are to be asked to pay more for medical care.

One of the main questions is whether the hardship case and excessive demands clauses will be able to guarantee a fair system.

Otherwise the reduction in the monthly contributions of patients envisaged by the health insurance companies would only be poor consolation.

Financial participation in nursing at home, however, can only be financed by cutting costs elsewhere.

The increase in health costs which can be observed year for year should have been stopped and lowered a long time ago.

The government has waited up to now to tackle this difficult project and thus risk its popularity among voters.

The reform cannot be effected without hardships.

Will it be an adequate guarantee for the medical care of all sections of the population?

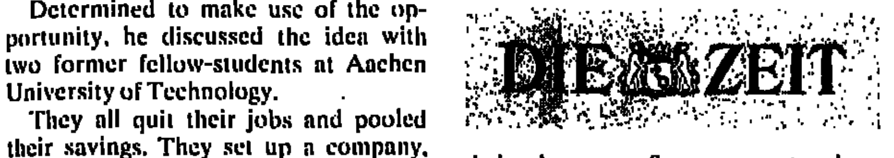
The Bundestag and Bundesrat must now assess the benefits and acceptability of the reform plans.

Thomas Hellmann

(Mannheimer Morgen, 14 October 1988)

■ COMPUTERS

Tapping into the era of the super number cruncher



Falk-Dietrich Kübler's bright idea came to him after reading that British computer specialists had developed a transputer.

To most people, one microchip may look much like the next, but he knew it was the nucleus of all computers and marked the beginning of a new computer era.

Determined to make use of the opportunity, he discussed the idea with two former fellow-students at Aachen University of Technology.

They all quit their jobs and pooled their savings. They set up a company, Parsytec GmbH, with a further DM800,000 from the Bonn Research Ministry and DM250,000 in bank loans. That was in 1985.

At roughly the same time Ulrich Trottenberg drew up his plan to make *an entirely new type of computer.* He too had sound financial backing.

His employer, the Society for Mathematics and Data Processing (GMD), a Bonn government research agency, was one of the founders of the new company, Suprenum GmbH, early in 1986.

The others were Krupp Atlas Elektronik and a Hamburg software house, Stollmann. Bonn and North Rhine-Westphalia chipped in a handsome DM100m.

Both projects have a common ambition: to develop a new-look computer totally different from the ideas on which current computers are based.

They plan to break the bounds of conventional technology and to make the big time in computers.

While Suprenum will not have anything specific to show for itself before the end of next year at the earliest, Parsytec, which was started on a shoestring, sold its first computers last year.

"Not even we were expecting to get going so soon," says Kübler, 39. Yet this year he expects a turnover of DM10m.

He and his Aachen firm have thus gained a foothold in a sector previously limited to a handful of computer companies, foremost Cray Research.

Cray is a byword for super-computers, number-crunchers that can handle in minutes operations that take conventional computers hours or days.

Cray and Control Data of America and Fujitsu, Hitachi and NEC of Japan virtually make up the numbers.

They cater for a market so exclusive that other leading computer manufac*turers have so far felt it was too small to* yield profit as well as kudos.

There are still only about 300 super-computers in use, and most of them are at universities and research centres.

Since *the mid-1980s they* have emerged from their research ghetto, however. A growing number of industrial companies have come to appreciate their advantages. Super-computers have *helped their users to develop more effi*cient light bulbs and to house more and more functions on a single microchip.

In the super league . . . Parsytec's Kübler. (Photo: archives)

They crunch their way through investment strategies at lightning speed for banks and stock exchanges. They calculate new combinations of active agents for the chemical industry.

Their greatest advantage is the ability to simulate experiments that would otherwise cost too much.

This is an opportunity the motor industry in particular has been quick to appreciate. New models are no longer driven into brick walls by the dozen; crash trials are now simulated instead.

Yet potential customers are still prevented by a substantial handicap from using what can only be called the Formula 1 computer category. Conventional hardware made by leading manufacturers is expensive.

A super-computer costs between DM30m and DM40m. Ambitious research and development divisions are constantly trying to make them progressively *faster, and that costs a fortune.*

Yet no human brain can compete with a super-computer for speed. The super-computer handles in a single second calculations it would take a man with a pocket calculator 2,400 years.

But jumbo computers have a crucial weakness. Not even the fastest model can identify a human face in seconds, something a baby can do.

Despite their stupendous speed computers cannot compute with the working methods of the human brain with its billions of interlinked nerve cells.

The human brain can handle many items of information simultaneously; an electronic brain can only proceed step by step, no matter how fast.

That is why conventional super-computers make do with one or a handful of special processors that require a separ*ate command for each step. This princi*ple, which has held good for 50 years, has almost reached the end of its development potential.

The heat generated presents constructors with serious problems. Computers would melt were it not for refrigeration systems. The shell of the latest Cray super-computer, for instance, is filled with a special coolant.

The corresponding Control Data computer is immersed in a tank of liquid nitrogen at a temperature of -180° C. This is an icy cold at which microchips work faster, yet there are limits to their development potential.

The obvious answer is to model new ideas on the way the human brain works. It isn't a new idea. Many have tried and many have failed.

The Ministry of International Trade *and Industry in Tokyo launched an am*bitious computer project in 1982 to show the rest of the world how good and creative Japanese engineers and scientists were.

Backed by ample funds, it set out to develop the fifth computer generation. The Institute for New Generation Computer Technology, jointly launched by the Japanese government and Japanese industry, was set the task of designing and constructing a prototype by 1992.

Sixty-five research and development engineers and scientists at universities and eight leading companies have since devoted their working hours to teaching the computer to think.

The news first shook the rest of the world to the core, but less has been heard of the Japanese *project* in recent years. The Japanese seem to have discovered, like others before them, that machines cannot be made human.

One of the most serious obstacles so far has been the fact that processors are "loners." It is hard to "persuade" them *to communicate with each other, and* communication is essential if they are to work as a group.

Group work will, moreover, only be really effective if all concerned are fully occupied. This even spread of the workload is the challenge that faces construction engineers.

About 100 companies all over the world are busy trying to build parallel computers. Most of them are small-scale operations based in garages, but Danny Hillis, the US computer designer of the connection machine, leads the field.

Hillis, who originally planned to study neurophysiology, has succeeded in interlinking 65,000 processors. His computer is rated the world champion of parallel installations.

Suprenum, the German prestige pro*ject, will interlink 256, while Parsytec* has so far interlinked 64.

Unlike Suprenum and the Connection machine, Kübler and his staff are relying not only conventional processors but on transputers, the new development by Inmos of Britain.

He took a great risk. In autumn 1984, when he first came across details of the ambitious Inmos project, not even a prototype existed. And what there was, on paper, could just as easily have been a practical failure.

But, by the beginning of 1986 Kübler and his backroom boys in Aachen had their first transputers with which to ex*periment. They then set out to vie with* conventional super-computers in performance.

Their new computer design can be enlarged indefinitely yet is cheap. For about *one tenth of the price of a con*ventional super-computer their new parallel machine, the Megaframe, can handle sums just as fast as the jumbos.

It is all done by transputers. They are specially designed to be extremely communicative and thus solve the most serious problem, that of best coordinating internal cooperation.

The Megaframe's forte is where the conventional super-computer has weaknesses: in identifying images and patterns.

It is already in use to test the tensile strength of the carbon fibre matting used in Airbus tail units. That is more *than the human eye can manage.*

So several customers already appreciate the strong points of the Megaframe. But lending makers are still reluctant to commit themselves on paral*lel machines.*

Siemens, for instance, have yet to be convinced even though the concept has long been accepted all over the world as *the most promising new idea. Or so says* Thomas Nitsche, who also started working, together with two colleagues like Kübler, on a parallel computer several years ago.

But he was not interested in, as he put it, spending weeks filling in application forms to the Research Ministry. He banked on Siemens, sent his model to them for a year's benchmark tests — and is still waiting.

IBM is tight-lipped about parallel computers too. It is still banking on conventional computer technology and on star engineer Steve Chen, who used to work for Cray.

After a dispute with his boss, Seymour Cray, Chen set up his own company early this year. IBM are bankrolling it.

There is a special reason why the leading manufacturers are not enthusiastical*ly backing the new computer technology.* It is that programs and software for parallel computers still present serious problems.

The leading manufacturers' customers *have invested heavily in programs writ*ten for the existing computer world. This software will be no use with parallel computers.

This doesn't dismay Kübler. His mainframes are so much cheaper than conventional equipment that he is confident potential customers will switch allegiance and buy the new design.

"The transputer," he says, "can build a bridge." In the Far East it has already done so.

He returned from Japan in May 1987 with a contract with Matsushita in his pocket. The Japanese company has since helped to market the Aachen computer. Kübler is on a similar mission in the United States.

Gunhild Lange

(Die Zeit, Hamburg, 7 October 1988)

German stake in American centre

Germany has a stake in the International Computer Science Institute at the Berkeley campus of the University of *California.*

The aim of this link is to enable German academies to collaborate institutionally with US colleagues in information science research, say Research *Ministry officials in Bonn.*

The Ministry and a society specially set up for the purpose are investing roughly DM6m a year in research projects.

Members of the society include the Society for Mathematics and Data Processing (GMD), a Bonn government research facility, and leading German companies such as Daimler-Benz, Bertelsmann, Krupp, Mannesmann and Siemens.

The institute will initially be concentrating on artificial intelligence and computer theory. It will also be working on data bases for robot technology and on computer networks.

German aims, the Ministry says, will include setting up a regular information exchange, harnessing US research and development findings and training young German specialists.

A further aim will be to help reverse the brain drain by recruiting German computer specialists who have moved to the United States.

Work at the Berkeley institute will also help with the GMD's Suprenum project, aimed at developing a super-computer for the 1990s, Ministry officials add.

dpa

(Nordwest Zeitung, Oldenburg, 3 October 1988)

■ FINANCE

Old-established firm finds cheap oil was expensive mistake

Plummeting oil prices, good for consumers, brought Klöckner & Co., of Duisburg, to its knees. It lost between DM600m and DM700m on petroleum futures. That could have been the end had it not been for the Deutsche Bank. In this article for *Die Welt*, Joachim Gehlhoff writes that the bank acted with such speed that neither suppliers nor customers nor other companies in the group had time to shake in their shoes.

The Duisburg trading and holding company, Klöckner & Co, was founded in 1903 by Peter Klöckner.

The company's supervisory board has long been chaired by Karl Klasen, ex-spokesman for the board of Deutsche Bank and now supervisory board chairman of the Bundesbank.

He was joinedd three months ago as vice-chairman by F. Wilhelm Christians, ex-spokesman for the board of directors and now supervisory board chairman of the Deutsche Bank.

There once was a time when the boot was *on the other foot. Günter Henle*, father of the present Henle brothers, Jörg Alexander, 54, and Christian Peter, 49, was on the best of terms with the Deutsche Bank for decades, finally serving as vice-chairman of the bank's supervisory board.

Günter Henle, who died in 1979, was the son-in-law of the founder, Peter Klöckner, and an industrialist who played a leading role in Germany's post-war economic recovery.

So the management of both companies know and trust each other. And just as well.

Smoothly, noiselessly and at lightning speed, the country's largest commercial bank has moved in to bail out one of the country's leading trading companies.

Klöckner & Co., with a payroll of 10,000 and turnover of DM12bn this year, was whisked from the brink of bankruptcy before as much as a rumour was heard that the company might be in deep water.

As an interim shareholder, alone or with others, the bank has replenished the capital basis of which the company was deprived virtually overnight by gigantic losses of up to DM700m in the petroleum futures market.

The helping hand was lent perfectly and professionally, news of the rescue coinciding with that of the company's enormous losses.

Neither suppliers nor customers of either Klöckner & Co. or other group companies had time to shake in their shoes.

The others are Klöckner-Werke AG of Duisburg (raw and processed steel) *and Klöckner-Humboldt-Deutz AG of* Cologne (engines, agricultural engineering and plant construction).

Between them they and their combined payroll of 60,000 are likely to top DM24bn in turnover this year.

The lightning bail-out has left many questions unanswered. How, for one, could the debacle possibly have happened?

Futures may be traded as a matter of course in the international oil business, but how could the Duisburg dealers lose so much money overnight?

How irresponsible can they have been to so disregard the difference between selling and buying prices that they were caught so devastatingly off-balance?

They aren't newcomers to the business, when all is said and done.

For the time being conjecture is all we have to go by. Only last spring, for instance, Klöckner & Co.'s Jörg A. Henle announced that the company's oil business had been doubled to 8.8 million tonnes a year within two years — and without as a single mishap.

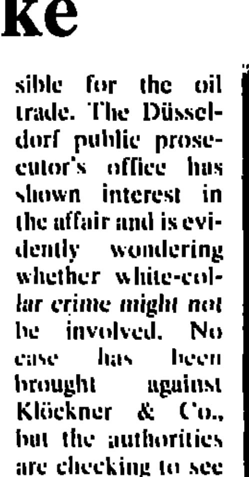
Most of the oil business was done by Klöckner as one of Germany's leading heating oil dealers, but the total included three million tonnes in the international crude oil trade.

Klöckner's crude oil trading must since have gone through the roof. Since August the price of crude oil in world markets has declined by roughly $3.50 per barrel, or about DM50 per tonne.

To be caught on the wrong foot to the tune of DM700m the company would, for instance, have had to have contracted to buy up to 15 million tonnes in the expectation of higher prices.

Klöckner's Duisburg head office is tight-lipped about such conjectures. Mention is merely made of rules of in-house jurisdiction having been disregarded and of in-house control mechanisms having been circumvented.

The younger Henle brother, Christian Peter, promptly resigned — and rightly so as the board member responsible for the oil trade. The Düsseldorf public prosecutor's office has shown interest in the affair and is evidently wondering whether white-col*lar crime might not* be involved. No case has been brought against Klöckner & Co., but the authorities are checking to see whether investigations might be appropriate. Jörg A. Henle, the founder's last remaining grandson still with the company, is likely to be taking a closer look at the situation too.





Resigned . . . Christian Peter Henle.
(Photo: Wolf P. Prange)

Imagination and clear thinking, determination and tireless energy, plus a second sense for moderation and limits to what was feasible are said to have been the sterling qualities of his grandfather Peter Klöckner.

Have his grandsons inherited too few or too little of these qualities? Are they now about to lose control of their birthright, with the bank agreeing to keep the firm going but, arguably, subject to converting it into a public limited company?

These are all questions that would *never for one moment have occurred to* Peter Klöckner. A tireless worker who once dismissed a manager by sarcastically remarking that he appeared to travel during the daytime, he first made a name for himself as a steel dealer but saw the trading company as the nucleus of his group.

He laid the groundwork for the group as it remains to this day, with associated companies in Duisburg and Cologne, the only difference being that the group is no longer a group in the original sense.

Klöckner & Co. has only minority holdings in Klöckner-Werke AG (18 per cent) and Klöckner-Humboldt-Deutz AG (about 40 per cent), so it no longer qualifies as a group by the terms *of the present Companies Act.*

Peter Klöckner was nicknamed the *Sanitätsrat* (a title conferred on distinguished medical practitioners) for his skill at breathing life back into ailing companies (and taking them over). The post-war period confronted his successors with repeated challenges as they struggled to keep his legacy together.

Son-in-law Günter Henle's diplomatic tour de force in averting the confiscation of the family's majority shareholding in the Klöckner-Werke as enemy property is unforgotten.

Klöckner sen. had transferred the shareholding to a Dutch family foundation for fear, before the war, that it might be confiscated by his fellow-countrymen.

Henle's sons then did a splendid job in handling the next major challenge, which was DM285m in estate duties that threatened to wipe out the family's *holding in Klöckner & Co. in 1983.*

They slightly reinterpreted their grandfather's intentions in setting up the original family foundation and transferred DM270m in share capital, almost the entire capital of Klöckner & Co., to a non-profit making foundation, the Peter-Klöckner-Stiftung.

They certainly demonstrated entrepreneurial spirit in making Klöckner & Co. one of Europe's leading trading houses, operating worldwide in 14 sectors, including such traditional ones as steel.

They were frequently less lucky in operating profitably or in boosting profits in many sectors of the group's operations.

Tens of thousands of *small shareholders* are only too *painfully aware* that Klöckner-Werke AG and Klöckner-Humboldt-Deutz AG have not paid dividends on share capital for years. Last

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■ FINANCE

Stocktaking at stockmarkets a year after The Crash

The stockmarkets were just beginning to let The Crash of 1987 fade from memory when the Klöckner fiasco broke (see previous page). This, says the Berlin daily, *Der Tagesspiegel*, reminded everyone just how susceptible the markets are to surprises. Klöckner has caused a dent in the rising German market. The newspaper says that although what has happened since the crash last year indicates that that it was mainly the result of price rectification rather than the harbinger of world-wide recession, this doesn't mean such setbacks are a thing of the past. The paper argues that what is needed is a globally designed monetary, economic and fiscal policy to instil confidence internationally. Although it was gradually being recognised that the western industrialised nations could not afford differing basic economic views, governments were finding it difficult to act together.

The near-collapse of Klöckner, one of the biggest German steel and oil trading houses, right in the middle of an *upward stockmarket trend* reminded everyone that securities markets are always vulnerable to surprises.

The spectre of last year's crisis still haunts the financial markets.

Although the Klöckner shock was cushioned by Deutsche Bank's action, the stockmarket has not yet fully recovered.

The crash on 19 October, 1987, only temporarily cast a shadow over international stockmarkets.

Some specialists at first thought that the future after the crash would hold only darkness. Others thought that there was no point in crying over spilt milk. The show must go on. And, indeed, the plaintive cry of "Shares? Never again!" soon subsided.

Stockmarkets *quickly* returned to business as usual. Even though a number of economic policy parallels can be drawn between October 1987 and October 1988 the stockmarket situation today contrasts sharply with last year.

Last year many stock exchanges were still riding on the crest of a wave of euphoria, the current mood is one of sobriety and caution.

Events since the crash has shown that the collapse of share prices was primarily a rectification of exaggerated price levels rather than a harbinger of world-*wide recession.*

The inference that a second stockmarket crash is not to be expected does not mean that setbacks are a thing of the past.

At the end of cyclical cycle there is growing uncertainty about inflation, interest rate formation and future growth reserves.

The example of the Federal Republic of Germany, however, shows that cautious optimism is the right approach, something reflected in the — on balance — rising share-price levels.

After a temporary "growth drought" things are picking up at an accelerated pace.

GNP recently increased by four per cent, the autumn trade fairs show full order books, and production has shifted into high gear. All of this is taking place against the background of relative price stability.

Above all, the energy costs continue to remain at an extremely low level.

In addition, the continuing expansion of domestic economic activity is complemented by an extremely successful German export industry.

Brokers at West German stock exchanges know, of course, that in this field there is no such thing as "splendid isolation."

Yet *at the moment positive factors* prevail throughout the world, and despite the mountains of debt there is no call for prophets of doom.

The question of an appropriate reaction remains.

On 19 October, 1987, the average level of share prices fell by 7.1 per cent in Frankfurt, 11.3 per cent in Zürich and 22.6 (!) per cent in New York.

During a single trading session the decrease in prices was greater than the increase in an entire year.

Panic selling immediately after the *crash made prices tumble even further.*

Things have improved considerably since. The dollar exchange rate has stabilised at a reasonable level vis-à-vis major international currencies and there is a renewed downward trend for interest rates.

Statisticians also report successes in the fight to offset the huge balance of trade deficits.

This particularly applies to the US economy, which is really taking off, as well as to the American unemployment figures, which show a continuing declining trend.

Apart from the current facts and figures, forecasts and psychological parameters there is another major determinant factor for stock exchange activity worldwide: the presidential election in the USA on 8 November and its possible repercussions for US economic policy.

The moment of truth is drawing closer. Pursuing a policy in line with the motto "the dollar is our currency but your problem" is shortsighted and would only create new imbalances.

The task of a globally designed monetary, economic and fiscal policy must be to bear joint responsiblity for the development of the world economy and to instil new confidence in international markets.

Agreement must be reached on an international concept with common objectives and coordinated measures.

The western industrialised nations can simply no longer afford differing fundamental economic views.

Although this insight is being gradually accepted the various governments find it difficult to act accordingly.

Almost all Americans have in the meantime realised that they have to get the upper hand of the "twin deficits", the budget and trade deficits, without *stalling the momentum of the world* economy.

Almost all Europeans and Japanese are aware of their joint responsibility for the reduction of worldwide imbalances. Kurt Tucholsky once emphasised that the world economy is an interlinked network.

Stock exchanges only have a future if it stays that way.

(Der Tagesspiegel, Berlin, 16 October 1988)

Stockmarkets a year after The Crash
How indexes have fared (high point before crash = 100)

	Before crash	Lowest point after crash	Oct 88
Tokyo	100	79	102
Vienna	100	74	89
Amsterdam	100	58	84
Paris	100	59	83
New York	100	64	79
London	100	64	78
Frankfurt	100	59	78
Zurich	100	62	75

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Nobel Prize winner predicted the bourse's nose-dive

In May 1987 a 76-year-old French professor, Maurice Allais, predicted the October 1987 crash six months before it came.

This year, the Swedish Academy awarded him the Nobel Prize for Economics.

The more recent publicity-pulling achievement of the elderly professor is *really no more than a by-product of* applied research, which in his case is firmly rooted in basic research on economic theory.

His basic research into the theory of the general equilibrium of markets was the real reason for the award.

Allais is a former professor of the Ecole Nationale Superieure des *Mines.*

In the 1940s and 1950s, he elaborated on studies by another Frenchman, Léon Walras, and the Italo-Swiss sociologist and economist, Vilfredo Pareto, on the interdependence of markets and the general economic equilibrium.

Allais concentrated on the efficiency characteristics of the market system with special emphasis on the time factor and on the influence of uncertainty and risk on entrepreneurial and household decisions.

The Swedish Academy made special mention of the generalised and more sound mathematical footing Allais gave to the Walras/Pareto equation systems.

Apart from his principal work completed during his earlier years, the *Traité d'Economie Pure* (1952), Allais also conducted extensive research on *almost all aspects of pure economic* theory and on the analysis of capital, money and interest.

The titles of his various publications give an idea of the wide range of his interests: Affluence or Poverty, Growth Without Inflation, The Role of Capital in Economic Development, Economy and Interest, Foundations of a Theory of Utility and Risk or Spending Growth and the Velocity of Circulation.

The theoretical "favourite subject" of the Nobel Prize winner, however remained (as in the case of his colleague, Edmond Malinvaud) the theory of interest and of efficient capital allocation in the process of economic development.

Allais, who was born on 31 May, 1911, in Paris, is not only an economist, but also a qualified engineer.

He has also lectured at the other famous elitist universities in Paris as well as at the Geneva Institute of International Studies, the Juglar Seminar of Monetary Analyses at the University of Paris and the French National Research Institute CNRS.

And when Allais, who has been an officer in the Légion d'Honneur since 1977, is not theoreticising about efficient risk strategies he (still?) exposes himself to risks of more practical nature: by publishing stock exchange reports or by ski-ing.

Elmar Kowalski
(Süddeutsche Zeitung, Munich, 19 October 1988)

Klöckner fall

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year Klöckner & Co. had to transfer its profits to the other two companies, depriving the family foundation of even the meagre two-per-cent return on its shareholding with which it had previously had to make do.

Yet the Deutsche Bank need hardly worry, as matters stand, about not earning a reasonable return on its investment in Klöckner & Co. Business is booming in all sectors except oil.

Record profits are expected this year on normal trading, so the futures loss looks like being a once-only setback.

Joachim Gehlhoff
(Die Welt, Bonn, 14 October 1988)

■ GERMAN CULTURE

Goethe Institute takes the message to the world

There are many German institutes both inside and outside Germany which try to give people an opportunity to find out more about German culture.

The (CDU-backed) Konrad Adenauer Foundation, for example, or the Hans Seidel Foundation (CSU), the Friedrich Ebert Foundation (SPD) and the Naumann Foundation (FDP).

But the Goethe Institute, which has its head office in Munich, is the biggest communication medium of German culture.

Although the institute has the legal status of a registered society under private law (with Klaus von Bismarck as its president) it ranks as an official organ of the Federal Republic of Germany.

The claim is not entirely unfounded, since the lion's share of its annual budget (roughly DM230m) is financed by the Bonn Foreign Office (1985: DM199.4m; 1987: DM197m). Only the Goethe institutes in Germany itself have to finance themselves.

Today there are about 150 Goethe institutes, an institution first set up in 1951, in 68 countries throughout the world.

Only recently, institutes were opened in Peking and Budapest, whereas the Teheran office had to be closed because of problems caused by a jibe at Ayatollah Khomeini in a German variety television show.

Goethe institutes employ 2,800 people worldwide. There are 331 who are officially sent out overseas and who change their location every five years or

General-Anzeiger

so; 387 work in the Germany; and 1,841 are locally contracted overseas staff paid at local rates of pay who are generally non-Germans, but not always.

There are 544 of the Goethe institute employees are teachers, 670 domestic staff and 627 administrative personnel.

Rising costs and demands for activities are contrasting sharply with a decrease in funds. The six-month re-appointment freeze imposed by Bonn has been having the worst effect because several institutes work on a one-man or one-woman basis and may thus have to close down.

A closer look at the offices described as "cultural institutes" shows that some of them should be better described as "peacocks on crutches."

In his huge office in St. Louis, Missouri, for example, the head of the Goethe institute there, Otto Steinmetz, sits back and looks at the magnified shots of the Hawaiian flowers he photographed during his holiday.

He is responsible for an area the size of the Federal Republic of Germany, and only has a half-day employee whose job was also almost eliminated recently: "Others have got five staff members to do what I have to do on my own," says.

He explains that he would not be able to handle the workload if he didn't happen to be a bachelor. At least he doesn't have to justify overtime and postponed holidays to a wife and children.

Steinmetz shares these problems with many other branches of the Goethe Insitute all over the world.

The external cultural policy of the world's biggest exporting nation is particularly hard hit by official austerity measures.

There are complaints about a waning interest in the German language throughout the world.

Some of the problems are home-made, and the Goethe Institute staff have often tightened their belts so much that there is little room to breathe.

The 11 Goethe institutes in the USA, the temple of the market economy, often have trouble doing the work that is really needed. This often leads to a mood of resignation.

According to Steinmetz there are still plenty of people interested in learning German.

The Goethe Institute statutes describe the "fostering of the German language abroad and the promotion of international cultural cooperation" as the institution's major goals.

All Herr Steinmetz can then do is suggest crash courses in Germany itself. Some people can fit this in, but most just cannot stop work for two months.

If people do decide to go to Germany, this is an indirect profit for the Goethe institutes, since those in Germany work on a cost-covering basis, which means they have to manage without subsidies and are completely fee-financed.

Steinmetz does not feel that the interest in the German language is on the wane.

German is a popular language to learn in St. Louis. This may have something to do with the fact that 40 per cent of the city's inhabitants have German ancestors.

But Steinmetz points out that "if we can't offer language courses it's hardly surprising that the people go to the Alliance Francaise."

In the New York "Goethe House" on Fifth Avenue, life and work is a bit easier to take than in the "provinces", even though belts have had to be tightened here as well.

In the heart of Manhattan, emphasis is placed on art exhibitions, libraries and other forms of cultural communication, such as poetry readings, film seminars or lectures on life in Germany.

The only language courses which take place here are to check and update teaching material.

Uwe-Jürgen Ohlau, the head of the New York institute, emphasises that he does not intend competing with commercial enterprises in this field and simply tries to help these organisations by providing teaching material.

"German will always remain a minority language, and the only chance is to establish German as an elitist language," says Ohlau.

Although many other languages are more popular in the USA Ohlau feels that Spanish will come out on top in future.

Apart from the hundreds of thousands of people learning the language of their neighbouring countries a growing number of people are turning towards the Pacific Basin region.

A gigantic project is planned for the final three months of this year. The Ruhr area, a centre of the coal-mining industry, will be presented in many parts of Manhattan with the help of dances, music, films and art.



Austerity measures are making it harder for people like Otto Steinmetz (right, in his St. Louis institute office) help girls like her. (Photo: Lars Wynter)

Even the small art galleries in Greenwich Village will be presenting works on the Ruhr area.

This project would not have been possible without private sponsorship. The Essen-based Krupp Foundation jumped in to lend a helping hand and the Lufthansa airline company is making it possible for many artists and filmmakers to make the transatlantic flight by offering numerous free flight tickets.

All this would be of little use if the Goethe staff are unable to persuade the host country to become a co-organiser of the event.

This guarantees that programmes are not put on which neglect the host country's interests.

In the USA, where nothing works on the basis of government subsidies, this is usually a matter of luck and patience, since the Americans themselves have to spend a great deal of time and effort raising funds for their own projects.

Jackson Janes, a professor in Pittsburgh, is convinced that the effort is worthwhile.

Janes worked for ten years as a member of the staff of the Marshall Fund organisation in Bonn and knows what he is talking about.

In Pittsburgh, the "Ruhr area" of the USA, the industrial aspect of the problems facing the Ruhr region is to be presented.

In Manhattan art and mythology are more likely to draw the crowds than industrial restructuring problems Pittsburgh has already overcome.

The presentation of this subject is unlikely to lead to the problems the Goethe institutes sometimes face when they take too critical a look at Germany's current problems.

Most trouble is caused by "clients" who are not really intended as a target group for the programme: people just passing through as tourists or Germans who are staying in the States for just a short while.

Sometimes they feel there is too much sex in the film *Rheingold*, sometimes they feel that the art presented is too dreary, left-wing or one-sided.

One politician who wrote to Bonn Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher complained in his letter that "the freedom of the Goethe Institute cannot go so far as to damage the Federal Republic of Germany through deliberate disinformation and deliberately biased negative presentations."

The letter triggered a stormy protest in the Munich head office. In future, members of German consulates and embassies are to try and improve the situation by going along to the events staged by the Goethe institutes and stating the official positions. This explains the regular suspicion of censorship and inti-

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It's a long way from the Wineland-Pfalz

On 6 October, 1683, the sailing ship *Concord* dropped anchor in the mouth of the River Delaware in Pennsylvania.

On board was the first larger group of German immigrants, 13 families from the centre of Krefeld, west of Düsseldorf.

The anniversary was this year marked by a celebration at the House of representatives in Washington.

Those settlers from Krefeld founded a settlement called Germantown near where Philadelphia stands today.

Between six and seven million Germans emigrated to the USA during the following 300 years.

During the last census 68 million Americans — one in four — stated that they had German ancestors.

A number of Bundestag MPs belonging to the 140-strong German-American parliamentary group came along to the celebration in Washington.

The Rhineland-Palatinate (which the US State Department described to the press as "Wineland-Pfalz") Premier Bernhard Vogel came along as president of the Bundesrat.

Minister of state in the Bonn Chancellery Stavenhagen was also there. Both President Richard von Weizsäcker and Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher sent messages of greeting.

And how did the Germans present themselves? In traditional Bavarian style.

For Americans the *Oktoberfest*, the Munich beer festival, is irresistible. A dance group called *D'lustige Wendlstoana Stamm 1884* put in an appearance in traditional costume, dancing to brass band music. The buffet lined up *Weisswürstl* (veal sausage), sauerkraut and German beer.

The Federal Republic of Germany is looking for a lobby in the USA. It wants to build bridges. The celebration on 6 October is one way of doing so.

The problem is that Bavarian singing and folk dances fosters an image which reinforces prejudices.

It was no mere coincidence that President Reagan laid the foundation stone for the Holocaust Museum, which will commemorate the six million Jews who were killed by the Germans when it is finished in 1990, just one day before German American Day.

No Bavarian folk dance was able to dispel the shadow of that.

Jürgen Koar

(Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger, Cologne, 8 October 1988)

■ LITERATURE

In memory of a storm bird of freedom

Of all the German-language dramatists who died at a very early age, Georg Büchner is probably the most fascinating.

Büchner studied the history of the French Revolution and presented his interpretation of events on stage.

He had a profound understanding of human nature and natural sciences.

He was the author of probably one of the most significant social tragedies and one of the least performable German comedies ever written.

His sister described the man with such an effervescent and versatile mind as one of the "young storm birds of freedom."

Büchner was born in Goddelau near Darmstadt on 17 October, 1813, and died in exile in Zurich on 19 February, 1837.

His works have fascinated generations of readers ever since.

His companion, the democratic journalist Wilhelm Schulz, tried to describe what was so fascinating about Büchner:

"The first thing one notices when reading Büchner's publications is the abundance of his uninhibited, short and sharp ideas, his frank and bold truthfulness, which enables every mouth and every object to speak in his language regardless of whether this is pleasing to the ear."

He ranked as an independent spirit of the highest ability" and many feel that he could have become a German Shakespeare.

Büchner stormed into German literature like a thunderbolt with his political pamphlet *Der Hessische Landbote*.

This publication, with its famous motto *Friede den Hütten! Krieg den Palästen!*, was pieced together on the basis of official statistics and backed by quotations from the bible.

It was distributed in the villages near Giessen and Butzbach (both in Hesse).

The pamphlet described the repressive measures employed by the ruling princes, explained the numerical and moral superiority of the people over the "oppressors", and outlined visions of the future:

"Yet the realm of darkness is coming to an end. A free state with rulers elected by the people will emerge out of the Germany now maltreated by the princes."

The authorities immediately recognised the dangerous effects the message contained in this publication could have and took countermeasures.

In August 1834 a fellow "conspirator" in possession of 139 copies of the pamphlet was arrested, and in the years which followed there were many interrogations, arrests and later trials of Büchner's friends.

Büchner himself managed to escape the imprisonment ordered by the authorities with the help of this bold and outspoken public appearances.

In January 1835 he began to write his drama *Danton's Death*. Just one month later he sent the manuscript to the Sauerländer publishers and its editor Karl Gutzkow, who was fascinated by the material and already published a short preprint in the Frankfurt daily newspaper *Phoenix*.



Forced to flee... Georg Büchner. (Photo: archives)

By this time, however, Büchner, who received a summons from the examining magistrate in Darmstadt, had already fled across the French border and was living in Strasbourg with his fiancée Minna Jaegle.

It was in Strasbourg that the dramatist worked on his narrative *Lenz*, a moving psychological study of the unfortunate *Sturm und Drang* poet, and on translations of two works by Hugo which were later also published by Sauerlander.

He also carried out natural science and philosophical studies in order to become a university lecturer.

His lecture in French on the nervous system of the barbels led to his membership in the Natural Sciences Society in Strasbourg.

In September 1836 he received a doctorate at the University of Zurich on the merit of this lecture.

In June 1836 Büchner wrote the draft version of *Leonce und Lena* for a comedy-play competition organised by the Cotta publishing house. As he handed in the play too late, however, he was not among the final candidates.

On 18 October, 1836, Büchner travelled from Strasbourg to Zürich.

In Zürich he began work on his perhaps most successful play *Woyzeck*.

The general topic of this social drama is the self-estrangement of a human being and is based on an authentic case.

The soldier Woyzeck, who is abused by his superiors as a medical guinea-pig and in his psychological distress finally stabs his unfaithful sweetheart, is the first German hero of a tragedy who has a lowly background and who cannot verbally express his ideas.

Büchner's life came to an early end after a typhus infection.

The Büchner Prize, the most important contemporary literature award in Germany, keeps the memory of Büchner alive.

(Lübecker Nachrichten, 16 October 1988)

Mixed feelings about the rediscovery of an author

This year's Büchner Prize, the most important German prize for literary achievements, has been awarded to the least-known living German-language author, Albert Drach.

Was the Büchner Prize jury bribed by Drach's publishing house Hanser or is the choice of the 86-year-old author a reflection of what the critic Marcel Reich-Ranicki describes as spreading senility?

Although the "Collected Works" of the Austrian moralist Drach have been on the market since the beginning of the 1970s literary critics, who are always on the look out for new talents, have not taken to this unusual author.

His book *Das grosse Protokoll gegen Zwetschkenbaum* (1964), the grotesque chronicle of how an Eastern European Jew is crushed under the bureaucratic wheels of the Austrian courts, caused a stir when it was first published.

The autobiographical report *Unsentimentale Reise*, however, caused embarrassment more than anything else.

Drach, a lawyer, has a preference for cold irony and the perfidious language of the bureaucrats.

The "black Schopenhauerian", as he was labelled by K.H.Kramberg, demonstrates a humour marked by a delight in the misfortunes of others as well as in his own.

Drach, a Jewish migrant who only by chance was spared extermination by the Nazis, regards the Marquis de Sade as the "only true and perfect revolutionary."

Drach's quotation-laden arguments in *In Sachen de Sade* expose the strategy pursued in his novels and dramas of using evil as a masque and as folly. The Hitler parable *Das Spiel vom Meister Siebentot* (1965) is a very good example. Drach's evil eye and twisted sense of humour, however, was not palatable to contemporary tastes. Once again he was forgotten. The award of the Büchner Prize gives the literary world another opportunity to revise its judgement on Drach's "jarring blind rage" and "verbal pedantry." The chances that today's younger generation may be drawn to the old-fashioned ironist are good.

Drach was born in Vienna on 17 December, 1902, the son of a grammar-school teacher who became chairman of an Austrian bank.

He grew up on the family farm, the *Drachhof*, in Mödling near Vienna, where he still lives today.

Encouraged by Anton Wildgans in his youth Drach published the poetry volume *Kinder der Träume* in 1919 and the play *Marquis de Sade*, today called *Satansspiel vom Göttlichen Marquis*, in 1929.

Following his law studies in Vienna and after obtaining his doctorate of law Drach set up a lawyer's office, which existed until the Anschluss in 1938.

Drach fled to the south of France and began his *Unsentimentale Reise* (Unsentimental Journey) between life and death, between humanity and inhumanity.

In 1947 he returned to the lawyer's office in Mödlingen.

Most of his works were written before the Second World War, but were often lost, had to be reconstructed and ended up lying in some drawer.

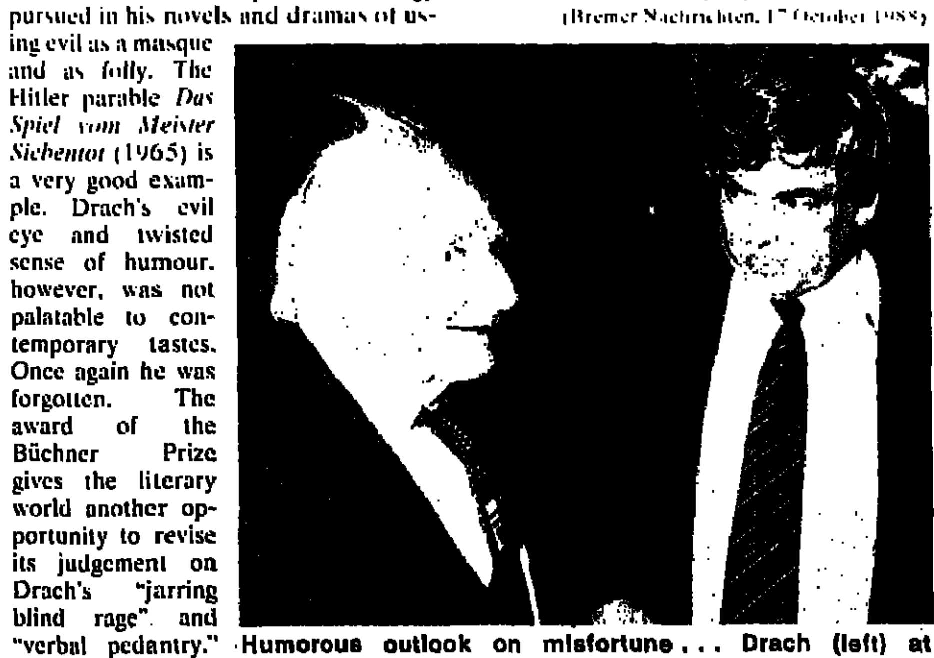
By chance Drach was rediscovered at the beginning of the 1960s and presented to the reading public by courageous publishers.

In 1972 Drach was awarded the Culture Prize of the city of Vienna, and in 1975 the Culture Prize of the region of Lower Austria.

After this his books again gathered dust in the libraries.

Wolfgang Schirmacher

(Bremer Nachrichten, 17 October 1988)



Humorous outlook on misfortune . . . Drach (left) at Büchner ceremony. (Photo: dpa)

Nobel Prize for Egyptian is policy signal

There were years when one might have been tempted to cast doubts on the meaning of the Nobel Prize for Literature.

The decisions of the Stockholm committee seemed influenced to an exaggerated degree by chance or by the principle of giving everyone a slice of the cake.

On the other hand, a tendency to focus international attention on unknown literary traditions, such as those in Africa, became discernable.

In 1986, for example, the Nobel Prize for Literature was awarded to the Nigerian Wole Soyinka. Apparently without consequences.

This year's decision to give the prize to the Egyptian Naguib Mahfouz looks very much like a cultural policy signal.

Mahfouz is not only an Egyptian author, but also ranks as *the* author of the Arab world.

The language he uses, a synthesis of High Arabic and Arabic dialects, is understood by all Arabs.

Some claim that the role Mahfouz plays in Arab literature is comparable to that once played by Flaubert in French literature. Literary experts compare his function in Cairo to Böll's function in Cologne.

Mahfouz introduced the novel to Arab literature, which was previously only familiar with the narrative.

Wherever his novels reflect the microcosm of old Cairo they become valid for the whole of Arabia.

The award of the Nobel Prize for Literature to Mahfouz is undoubtedly a tribute to the entire Arab cultural area.

In view of the prevailing emotions in the Near East it cannot be assumed that it will serve as a contribution to a modern pan-Arabian cultural awareness.

Ursula Giessler

(Saarbrücker Zeitung, 14 October 1988)

■ GERMAN FORESTS

Thoughts of pollution keep foresters' party quiet

The Romantic poets sang the praises of the forests. And within the German soul, there remains a place for them. Even level-headed realists can grow starry-eyed as they talk about the day-to-day benefits of having woodland.

The forest affects water resources and the climate. It provides a windbreak. It ensures a supply of fresh ground-water and it halts floods.

It prevents landslides and erosion, filters toxins out of the air and offers refuge to flora, fauna and people in need of rest and recreation.

These roles are so varied and invaluable that we may at times forget that forest acreage also supplies valuable commodities and is the livelihood of landowners and their staff.

They are convinced that were it not for them and their work there would be little or no forest left to be sentimental about, let alone to shower its blessings on us.

Forestry experts know the forest can only perform its many roles properly in the long term if it remains stable and healthy and is cared for and not constantly overtaxed.

Their knowledge is based on bitter experience from the late 18th century when human activity threatened: for a long time, more had been demanded of the forest than it could give; the demand for wood as a building material and a fuel had constantly increased.

Charcoal-burning and glass-blowing, mining, iron and steel, dike- and shipbuilding, forest pasturage, diversification and too much wild life all played a part in massively reducing acreage.

About 200 years ago wood supplies became so short that people began to realise that the destruction had to stop. The art of forestry developed. Young trees were planted to replace felled trees.

Its aim was to ensure that healthy, stable and ample forests were availablle for future generations.

This aim was achieved — and the profession of forestry has become recognised throughout the world.

Now the forest is threatened again. For years it has shown signs of ill-health. The symptoms are new. The signs are clearest in mountain forests in the Mittelgebirge and the Alps.

Experts have long suspected atmospheric pollution of being the chief culprit, and findings regularly confirm the fact even though they may fail to explain the process in exhaustive detail.

Few deny now that the evidence is sufficient to warrant action. The initial moves have been made. Sulphur dioxide pollution has been reduced as static emission regulations have begun to work.

Nitric oxides, which are also shortlisted as suspected culprits, are in contrast on the increase. They are mainlyemitted by vehicle exhausts.

More effective measures to combat atmospheric pollution have been a longstanding demand of the German Forestry Association, founded 150 years ago. Its sesquicentennial was recently celebrated in Munich, but the jubilation was muted.

The forestry experts and landowners, whether specialising in theory or practice, were too worried to celebrate the occasion on a grand scale.

As atmospheric pollution takes its toll, forest landowners are hard hit by low timber prices combined with steadily increasing costs.

All state-owned forests are now in the red, while privately-owned forests, which make up nearly half the total acreage, can at best barely make ends meet.

No-one can make a living from losses in the long term, and that is as true of the private forestry sector as it is of any other.

The self-evident principle of felling no more timber than can grow to replace it is otherwise likely to be cast to the winds.

Landowners will be tempted to fell more timber. Reserves of standing timber will decline. Owners will be living on borrowed time.

They will often not have enough cash in hand to tend and protect the forest, with the result that the risks of pest trouble and storm or avalanche damage will increase.

Financial difficulties will tend to heighten the biological risk posed by toxins that require particularly costly and time-consuming attention.

Woodland that is left to its own devices in circumstances such as these will sooner or later fail to function satisfactorily as a natural counterbalance and cover.

The experts even fear it may then no longer even measure up to the aesthetic expectations of people in need of rest and recreation.

Forestry officials and owners have thus appealed to the general public, who have come to expect the forest to perform an increasingly demanding welfare role.

It is, they point out, a service that has so far been provided as a matter of course, tacitly and free of charge. In return, forestry demands a reduction in atmospheric pollution.

The industry is also considering an appeal for financial assistance, at least where economic activity is hindered or damage is demonstrably caused.



Old Dobbin still on duty. The day of the draughthorse is far from finished. Here a forest worker uses one to do clearing work. Horses cause less damage in forests than tractors. (Photo: dpa)

There are neither market regulations nor subsidies for forest products, which suits all concerned splendidly, especially Ministry officials.

Yet envious glances are still occasionally cast in the direction of conventional agriculture. The private forestry sector naturally takes a dim view of the countless Federal and *Land* government subsidies paid to farmers.

Farmers are even paid roughly DM1,000 per hectare to leave land fallow, whereas the government has not seen fit to as much as compensate forest landowners for damage done.

Yet on 10 December 1987 the Federal Supreme Court ruled that the "new category" of forest damage not only deserved compensation but was badly in need of it.

So keen attention was paid to Bonn Agriculture Minister Ignaz Kiechle when he addressed the anniversary meeting in Munich.

He promised to champion the cause of compensation arrangements but made no bones about the legal and practical difficulties that would arise.

Constitutional lawyers were not entirely agreed on whether the Federal government was fully entitled to legislate on the subject, failing which Basic Law, the 1949 Bonn constitution, might need amending.

Many experts take a dim view of comprehensive subsidies irrespective of the recipient's input. Forestry must remain an economic proposition and must not, on any account, atrophy to mere administration drip-fed by government subsidies, says Richard Plochmann, professor of forestry at Munich University.

Not even a country as well-to-do as the Federal Republic of Germany can afford in the long term to maintain as a kind of nature reserve woodland and forests covering nearly one third of its surface area.

Forestry experts have accordingly set themselves the task of doing all they can to ensure that the industry becomes profitable again, and in Munich they lent each other every encouragement.

They considered possibilities of rationalisation, of using modern machinery and of reducing administrative outlay (which even in the private sector already accounts for between 30 and 40 per cent of costs).

They compared notes about the shape of things to come and, as usual, were obliged to think further ahead than other industries.

Where others peer apprehensively at the 21st century, foresters are already thinking in terms of the 22nd. Timber to be felled in the year 2100 must be planted today.

That makes forecasts all the more uncertain. Yet Horst Schulz, head of the Munich forest research institute, is prepared nonetheless to gaze into the crystal ball.

What he foresees sounds an optimistic note. Wood will continue to be an important raw material, being renewable and growing in ideal environmental conditions.

The demand for timber will probably increase, and increase substantially, as living standards improve in the developing countries.

So the industry need not be disheartened by the present decline in demand. On the contrary, it must step up timber production.

Herr Scholz does not favour planting fast-growing trees, however. They grow faster and better further south, he says.

By the same token, the German forestry industry is unlikely to be able to compete with conifers from Scandinavia and northern latitudes.

Given the German climate the best bet, he says, is to concentrate on high grade timber of various kinds.

Stable, healthy forests of trees suited to the climate are the best bet in economic terms too. The prospect is thus, hopefully, that of a better future.

Caroline Möhring

(Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung für Deutschland, 18 October 1988)

Improving, but not yet out of the woods

On the mend but not yet out of the woods is the verdict of this year's Bavarian white paper on the state of the forest.

Agriculture Minister Simon Nüssel reported signs of recovery among conifers and stabilisation among deciduous trees. Forty-three per cent of Bavaria's forest acreage has been given a clean bill of health, which is an improvement of five per cent on last year. Yet 18 per cent is still classified as visibly damaged.

Herr Nüssel said the acreage of damaged conifers had declined and that there had been a striking improvement among beech trees, but not among oaks.

"The overall situation is not good but there are grounds for cautious optimism," he said.

Areas worst affected are the Alps (from the Allgäu to Berchtesgaden), the Bayerischer Wald, the Frankenwald, the Fichtelgebirge, the Spessart, the Odenwald, the Rhön and the Würzburg region.

The Minister called on the public to show more responsibility: rather than spending more and more money on holidays, people ought to invest in a catalytic converter for their cars.

Huntsmen could also contribute toward the upkeep of the forest by keeping wildlife down to a reasonable level.

The fir tree continues to be the hardest-hit, with 59 per cent of its acreage reported damaged, followed — among the conifers — by spruce and pine trees, with 17 and 14 per cent respectively.

The hardest-hit deciduous tree is the oak, 38 per cent, followed by the beech tree, 25 per cent.

Regional differences are striking. Central Franconia is said this year to have 53 per cent of healthy forest acreage, as against a mere 36 per cent in neighbouring Lower Franconia.

Upper Franconia, 40 per cent, and Upper Bavaria, 39 per cent, are also alarmingly hard-hit.

Fridolin Engelfried

(Nürnberger Nachrichten, 14 October 1988)

■ MEDICINE

High levels of environmental poisons in new-born babies

Mannheimer MORGEN

The fatty tissue of new-born babies contains concentrations of chlorinated hydrocarbon that are as high as those of older children, a survey has found.

Manfred Teufel, of Mannheim University children's clinic, says the implication is that toxins are transmitted by the mother during pregnancy.

This is one of the more alarming findings of a survey of 262 boys and girls of all ages backed by Federal government research grants.

Detailed chemical analysis of tissue samples showed babies' and children's fatty tissue to contain alarmingly high traces of pesticides and softeners.

They all come in the extensive category of chlorinated hydrocarbons put to such widespread industrial use as softening agents and found in solvents and pesticides.

As they dissolve only in fat, and not in water, they enrich both animal and human fat. They are suspected of weakening the body's immune system and of causing malignant tumours.

The Mannheim research team, led by Professor Karl-Heinz Niessen, head of the children's clinic, first aimed to sound out the situation in general terms. Their initial concern was to find out how polluted German children were by chlorinated hydrocarbons, including regional differences in contamination levels, if any.

The research team was also keen to find out whether children with hereditary defects or tumours, malignant or benign, had above-average toxin counts.

The Mannheim project was carried out in collaboration with children's surgery units at hospitals in Bremen, Frankfurt and Munich. Between them they supplied fatty tissue samples from 1985 to 1988.

Samples were taken from various categories. They included 183 healthy boys and girls, 33 children with physical defects or benign tumours and 46 young patients with malignant tumours.

A further special group consisted of 17 new-born babies from whom 100 milligrams of body fat was taken before their first feed.

All samples were found to contain particularly high counts of polychlorinated biphenyl, or PCB, which is mainly used in manufacturing plastics, paints, lubricants and transformers.

The average PCB count was 1.6 milligrams per kilogram of fatty tissue, a level the project scientists feel is alarming.

"The situation is particularly upsetting," they wrote, "when one bears in mind that the fatty tissue of German children contains higher PCB levels than that of adults in a number of advanced industrial countries such as Japan, Great Britain, the Netherlands, New Zealand and Canada."

Residual DDT came second on the list of toxic substances registered — even though it has been banned (or its use strictly limited) since the 1970s throughout the European Community.

This finding testifies to the problems caused by a chain or cycle that is hard to interrupt.

Traces of DDT continue to find their way into the body fat of man and animals via residual toxins in the soil, via industrial waste and via food and fodder imports from countries that are less particular about using the toxic pesticide.

Consumers would do well to realise that the fatter the animal produce they eat, the greater the risk that it may contain residual toxins.

The Mannheim findings arrive at a political conclusion. Legislation, the project scientists say, may not be of no use whatever, but it often tend to take longer than expected to work.

The DDT concentration registered, averaging 0.6 milligram per kilogram of fatty tissue, is alarmingly high yet definitely on the decline.

That cannot be said of softening agents. In comparison with findings arrived at five years ago, the Mannheim research scientists found PCB traces to have markedly increased.

As for higher chlorinated hydrocarbon counts in the fatty tissue of children with hereditary defects or tumours, project scientists failed to come up with statistically significant distinctions between these categories and a comparable group of healthy children.

The figures also failed to reveal significant regional differences in toxin counts, such as higher levels in Bremen than in Mannheim, or vice-versa.

Dr Teufel, who supervised laboratory analysis, says it is still too early to jump to conclusions. A single survey of this size was not sufficiently representative to rule out a higher health hazard.

Besides, chlorinated hydrocarbons in body tissue might only be carcinogenic, or trigger tumours, in combination with a hereditary disposition or with other carcinogenic substances.

Project scientists were amazed to find that the fatty tissue of new-born babies testified to a high level of environmental pollution.

Yet this finding did not come entirely unexpectedly. Experiments with laboratory animals had already shown that toxins can be transmitted from mother to foetus via the placenta.

This pollution level was found to decline substantially in a baby's first six months, presumably a stage at which body fat increases out of proportion to pesticide intake.

Project scientists feel another explanation may be valid. Most babies from whom tissue samples were taken were fed on specially manufactured baby food, which has a low pollution level.

After the age of 12 months the toxin count was found to increase once more.

Given these and other recent findings, many mothers must wonder how long and how intensively they ought to breast-feed their babies.

A 1982/83 survey by the same team of research scientists found breast-fed babies to have a much higher toxin count in their fatty tissue than bottle-fed babies.

Asked what his view is, Dr Teufel refers to the recommendation made by the Scientific Research Association (DFG).

Breast-feeding babies for the first four months presents no problems, the DFG says. Mothers who would like to breast-feed their babies for longer should have their milk tested.

In Baden-Württemberg mothers are entitled to a free laboratory analysis of the first milk sample they send to the *Land* chemical research laboratories in Stuttgart.

Waltraud Kirsch-Mayer

(Mannheimer Morgen, 14 October 1988)

Starting life stuffed with pesticides. (Photo: Poly-Press)

Continued from page 10

midation. Uwe-Jürgen Ohlau says: "They've all got too much work to do," and Otto Steinmetz adds: "We can't make modern art more cheerful than it is."

"After all, prominent representatives of German culture must be given a chance to present their works, even if — as in the case of Günther Grass — they are classed as "left-wingers" but are internationally admired and respected."

It was Bonn President Richard von Weizsäcker who put an end to the last dispute about the programme of the Goethe institutes.

"A cultural institute which limits its activities to teaching a language would fall just as short of fulfilling its task as an institute which offers no language courses at all," the Federal President said.

The latter, however, is apparently becoming the rule to a growing extent.

Lars Wynter

(General-Anzeiger, Bonn, 8 October 1988)

■ AID

How a speech by Pastor Niemöller spawned a campaign against want

An organisation called *Kindernothilfe* is one of many groups in Germany which brings some form of aid to developing countries. *Last year, it spent about 65 million marks on projects in* many countries in Africa and Asia. The money came from private donations. There has been criticism that projects such as *helping mothers of infants, running literacy classes, supporting* orphanages, subsidising apprentices and bringing catastrophe relief are ultimately doomed to failure because basic living con*ditions are not changed. The organisation disputes this. It says* its experience has been the opposite. This article, which appeared in the daily *Frankfurter Allgemeine*, looks at *Kindernothilfe, which is run by a committee of the Protestant Church.*

Kindernothilfe (Help for Children in *Need) is one of the major charities* which grew from small beginnings in the western part of Germany after the war.

Through it, work is financed in 31 countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America. Funds come almost entirely from donations.

Children are helped regardless of their religion, race, cast or sex; at the *moment 105,000* are benefiting.

There are about 120,000 donors who generally each give 50 marks a month, often over many years. Donors are not only individuals. Sometimes entire school classes pitch in as well. In this way, more than 65 million marks last year was received.

The number of children in need grows from year to year but *Kindernothilfe* is unable to match this increase because donations are not keeping pace — at 5 per cent a year, the growth is not enough.

The organisation does not have its own projects. Instead, it contributes to the churches with whom it has worked hand in hand for many years. The churches advise *Kindernothilfe* where the money can best be used

The group began as a result of a sermon by Pastor Martin Niemöller at a Protestant Church conference in 1956 in Frankfurt. This moved six Evangelical members from Duisburg to act. They established contact with a missionary in India who requested support for five children.

An interesting point: in 1710, German help for India began in a similar way. In that year, the first German missionary to go to that country, Bartholomäus Ziegenbalg, turned to August Hermann Francke, a philanthropist from Halle (near Leipzig in the present day East Germany) for support.

In 1956, the Christians of Duisburg convened "Action Hunger" after the conference. They instituted a system of personal links: they wanted to know who the children were who were being helped because they wanted to offer not only material assistance such as board, food and education, but also prayer.

This idea of personal links has remained even as the movement has grown and changed its name to *Kindernothilfe*. Translators working without pay translate letters between sponsor and child from English into German and vice versa; or into or out of the respective Indian language.

Methods of sponsorship vary from country to country and even from one area to another. There are many forms.

There are classes where mothers can learn to feed their babies properly; children are sent to kindergarten; others are sent to board with families; classes for reading and writing are supported; children are helped to take on apprenticeships and start off in various careers; the handicapped are helped; orphanages supported; and emergency aid is supplied to victims of civil war, natural catastrophe or other disaster.

The various ways of handing out aid *have been developed over the years between* Nothilfe and its partners overseas.

Correspondence is maintained with church people who go to Africa, Asia and Latin America; the organisation also has advisers who know local problems.

Because often a major reason behind an emergency is general living conditions, almost all programmes have a subsidiary project attached: to improve those living conditions.

The organisation rejects the argument that these individual aid projects do not in the end achieve anything because they don't alter the basic conditions of living.

It says the role of the church first and *foremost relates to human and not political* structures. The churches cannot simply leave the suffering alone and la*ter console themselves that everything* is all right and that a new world has been created in which children no longer suffer.

Experience had shown that, in fact, in the long term, every support project does help general living conditions. Through such projects, it is possible to establish improved preconditions for the improvement of justice and freedom. The Evangelical Church also found that, it said in a report in 1973.

Nothilfe supports aid centres. In South Africa, for example, children tend to stay for two or three months in *homes, which makes it difficult for the* long-term relationship between child and sponsor to develop.

In such cases, the sponsor has his or her connection directed to aid centres rather than the children themselves.

A *third form of aid* is "project partnership" under which a group of people in Germany support a group in a developing country.

An example: a church group in Wetzlar donates 100,000 marks every year to a vocational training centre in the Philippines. The parish, in addition, has taken up 150 individual sponsorship arrangements.

Another arrangement is individual donations where the donor can seek out his or her own project.

Every donor is told that 12.5 per cent of the cash will be retained in Germany for use mainly to mount seminars and provide information.

Nothilfe runs about 200 seminars a year and advisers go to as many as 600 others.

Donors naturally develop an interest in how the child they are supporting is faring. Everything they want to know they learn through the business centre in Buchholz, part of Duisburg, where 100 workers under director Keiling keep everyone in contact: donors in Germany, workers in the field, the children themselves, the churches and the projects.

(Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung für Deutschland, 11 October 1988)

All you need to know about town planning in Kathmandu

General-Anzeiger

Support for developing countries own efforts and promoting understanding between industrialised nations and those of the Third World are *the main aims of the German foundation* for international development (DSE).

The foundation, which is financed by the Bonn Ministry for Economic Cooperation, has a department in the town of Beuel, near Bonn.

More than 50 employees are here involved in the work of the centre, in documentation, scientific promtion and education.

An important function is training specialists from developing nations.

Training is either done here, or a German specialist is sent out to do it on the spot. Much of the work concerns south-east Africa.

The DSE has been in existence for 28 years.

In that time, the files have been filled with the names of specialists ready to help in any given situation — from farming in extremely dry areas to bee-keeping.

The head of the centre, Dr Dieter Danckwortt, says that most of the time, the contact comes on the initiative of the Third World government. At any *one time, the centre runs about 40 programmes* with about 1,100 workers. One project is training people so that *they can return home and train high-*school teachers in up-to-date teaching methods.

*Dr Danckwortt explained that be*cause the centre was a mixture of state and private enterprise, it could carry *on its work even in a situation where,* say, Bonn and a recipient country severed diplomatic relations.

Changes of government in Third World countries, whether by coup or not, cause no great headaches.

After all, he explains, the head veterinary surgeon would hardly be changed in a hurry. Specialists tended to survive changes of government. Greater problems are caused by the debt crises of the Third World nations, says Danckwortt.

This meant sometimes that some countries were not in a position to maintain institutions where courses were held.

There were other practical problems caused: deteriorating roads meant that course participants often came late or not at all.

The centre also specialises in providing information inside Germany. Teachers and school pupils often write.

Sometimes they have been referred on by one of the Bonn government ministries.

Every year, the centre answers about 18,000 questions. Last year it sent off about a million pages of correspondence.

Current themes with greatest interest are Nicaragua and environmental protection in the Third World. There is information on call from more than 120 countries. There is a reading room.

The more difficult questions tend to come from government departments. Often, civil servants approach the centre to get hold at short notice of the names of people competent in a particular field to talk to visitors from the Third World about special problems. One of the *more unusual* issues to surface was town planning in Kathmandu.

All material at the centre is available *to the public. Despite the extensive na*ture of the centre, it is the smallest department of the DSE.

The other departments are in Bad Honnef (a training centre), Mannheim, Berlin and Feldafing. The last three deal with economic and social-development issues.

Claudia Mahnke

(General-Anzeiger, Bonn, 7 October 1988)



Name a country . . . archivists at the Beuel centre. (Photo: Jürgen Els)

■ HORIZONS

All the fun of the fair — at an ever-increasing cost

(Photo: Glaser)

The *carnival showman has been* around since the days of the crusades. The original breed were wounded *mercenaries who could no longer be* sent into battle.

They became quickly a part of the *summer: hawking their wares and running* their side-shows. Later came the shooting galleries and merry-go-rounds and dodgems.

Today, rising costs make touring with the fairs a precarious way to earn a liv*ing. Equipment costs are huge and* transport is not cheap, either.

In the days of the crusades, the show *people travelled throughout the land* in covered wagons, stopping off at taverns along the way to tell anyone willing to listen (and to pay) about *battles against* wild Saracens and other adventures.

In the Middle Ages, emperors gave them the right to run markets. Then they managed to penetrate the phalanx of trade guilds and brotherhoods, which gave them broader legitimacy and opened up more trading opportunities.

The entire nature of the showman and his milieu became more diverse: all sorts of odd characters attached themselves to the touring team. There were contortionists, teeth-pullers, quack doctors, exorcists and, as well, prostitutes. Market day frequently turned into a carnival.

As the secular and spiritual authorities were often one and same in the Middle Ages markets were held on religious holidays.

This led to what is known today in Germany as the *Kirchweih* or, more commonly, *Kirmes*.

These fun fairs (American readers will recognise the word "kermis") were then held once or at certain times of the year.

As early as 1466 under the patronage of the Duke of Mecklenburg Magnus II a wayfarers' brotherhood was founded.

It was under the supervision of the church but not obliged to take monastic vows.

Every year at Whitsun the brotherhood gathered in Rostock — a famous annual event known today as the Rostock Whitsuntide Market. The brotherhood was dissolved during the Thirty Years' War.

Renewed official alliances between the church and the showman were not established until after the Second World War.

The Catholic circus and showmens' spiritual welfare association was set up in 1954 and its Protestant counterpart organisation in 1967.

Under Otto the Rich (1156-1189), Leipzig, which then had a population of about 6,000, became a *Messestadt*, a town which holds regular trade fairs. Two such fairs were held in Leipzig, and a third was added in 1458 (the traditional New Year' Fair).

All kinds of travelling performers came along with the merchants to the fairground markets.

Tightrope walkers, peep-show box owners and, albeit in their earliest form, merry-go-rounds.

The profession of the travelling showmen took a decisive turn in the 19th century.

An official definition of the German word for showman (*Schausteller*) first appeared in the Popular Dictionary of the German Language published in 1822 by Th. Heinsius.

The dictionary describes a showman as a "person who puts something on show or presents something which is amusing or entertaining."

In 1822 Wilhelm Neumann first issued a magazine called *Der Komet* in Pirmasens, a magazine which up to this very day deals with the interests of the showman profession.

One showman gave a particularly vivid description of the fun-fair customs in one edition of the magazine published in 1886:

"I wasn't born in a carousel carriage, but I can still remember that my mother put me to bed in one when I had fallen asleep in her arms and was a nuisance to her while she was collecting money.

"That was my most favourite cradle, and must have been a good place to sleep amidst all the music and hurly-burly of the fair.

"The carousel had four such carriages as well as 16 wooden horses. All this was attached to iron poles and the horses and carriage were each linked with each other by chains; there was no floor.

"The merry-go-round was turned by school boys, who were given a free ride in return. Just like the horses later on they had to keep on running round in circles with the carousel.

"The calks and supports were decorated with red drapes. "An organ stood on a box, and behind this there was usually a coffeepot.

"The merry-go-round also had lights. Not just eight lanterns with oil-lamps, since there was no petroleum at that time, but four mirror lamps — something not everyone could afford."

The merry-go-round described here must have been a pretty elegant affair, since the earliest roundabouts were just *turnstiles made of wooden beams.*

The "passengers" had to keep these constructions moving *per pedes*.

Merry-go-rounds for the "common people" were modelled on the exercise and playing gadgets developed for the aristocracy.

These constructions were obviously much more elegant and, above all, more manoeuvrable.

Aristocrats were already sitting on models of horses in the 18th century, trying to pick up rings with lances as the horse rotated faster and faster.

The forerunners of the big or Ferris wheel were the Russian and Oriental swings.

The merry-go-round's turnstiles were simply brought into a vertical position. It took some time, however, before any great height was reached.

In 1920 the "Advanced Electro Russian Gondola" wheel still only had a diameter of 7.5 metres and a height of 11.5 metres.

New technological developments soon moved into this branch too. In fact, the showmen were always a hairsbreadth ahead of transport technology.

Even before the locomotive was invented they transported the wagons in which they lived and in which their material was stored with the help of locomobiles, and the first electricity-powered submarine merry-go-round was constructed in 1904.

The gigantic mechanical constructions at the fairgrounds made the big fun fairs an even greater attraction

The Munich Oktoberfest has been held since 1810, and the *Cannstatter Wasen* since 1818.

Hamburg's big fun fair, commonly known as the *Dom* (which literally means cathedral) dates back even further.

The fair is called *Dom* because its location is the site of a former cathedral, the *Mariendom* (Cathedral of the Virgin Mary).

Much to the annoyance of the church authorities, a market used to be held in the catherdral's chapels and side aisles every Christmas. The cathedral was first mentioned in a document dated *1329*.

The activities of the market tradesmen were officially permitted by Archbishop Burchard of Bremen in *1337*.

Following a decision by the city council the cathedral was pulled down between *1804* and *1806*, but the name *Dom* remained.

The safety regulations for fairground equipment also has a long history.

Special stability requirements were laid down for the "flying constructions" in Bavaria in March 1918.

Today there are strict safety provisions for all fairground equipment. This makes the fun of the fair an expensive business.

The five thousand family concerns which organise the fairground business invest DM50m a year.

A "simple" children's merry-go-round already costs about *DM500,000*.

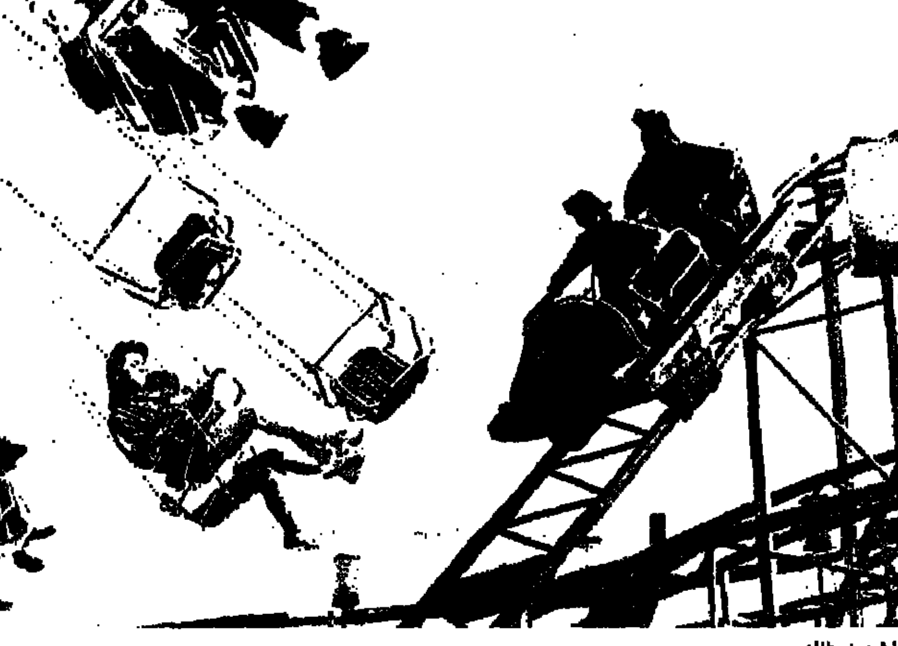
High investment costs of this kind together with ground rent and electricity, transport and personnel costs have pushed some showmen to the brink of financial ruin.

Fairground visitors are often expected to foot the bill. Many people think twice about spending DM5 or more for just one trip.

The fairground pleasures have become more and more expensive over the years, and there's not much room left for the romanticism of yore.

Ekkehard Jape

(Mannheimer Morgen, 15 October 1988)



(Photo: AP)

(Photo: dpa)